







EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT  
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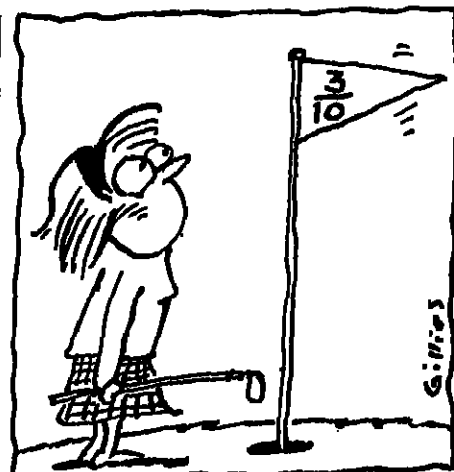
## A ROUND WITH MALICE

No development in 1987 has been more creative than the appointment of the Secretary of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club to the Secretary of State's Task Group on Assessment. A copy of his report which may or may not form part of the document Mr Kenneth Baker intends to publish in the New Year, has arrived in this office, wrapped round a golf ball and driven through a window in the editor's office. Here it is.

"Let us define the problem. There is to be a National Curriculum. And there are to be national tests at 7 or 8, 11, 14 and (in some cases) 16. Ministers have talked of bench-marks and standards; but how can all children be measured against the same bench-marks when the normal range of ability means that half the population will find the bench-mark standard too easy, and half will find it too difficult?"

These are familiar questions for the golf administrator. At the 19th hole, we speak of level else. It has been one of the glories of the game that players of very different ability can play together on reasonable terms - something which would be quite impossible at, say, tennis or snooker. Why? Because of the handicapping system.

This is what must now be set up for education. The pupils' earliest years would be devoted to kindergarten and infant school activities leading to the first national assessments at 7 or 8 when each would have to apply for a Handicap. This would be awarded by local Handicapping Com-



mittees, using tests specially devised by the Royal and Ancient, who might choose to sub-contract this task to Moray House in Edinburgh, or even the National Foundation for Educational Research somewhere in the south.

To get a handicap a child would have to master the basic tests (or clubs as we call them) of learning. Not every pupil would be successful at the first go, but few would need more than two tries.

A child would emerge with a handicap which might be anything from scratch to 28. This would enable him or her to compete on level terms in the Medial Competitions (or tests) which the Secretary of State intends to institute at 11 and 14. Given a suitable handicap each pupil should stand the same chance of excelling as someone whose natural ability was greater or less. No longer would the same people win all the prizes.

giving a fully satisfactory answer gets the put mark, but reversing the normal golfing practice, bonus points would be given for answers of special merit (one for a double answer, for fully correct answers which fall short of fully correct answers but still deserve a positive mark, perhaps one, two, or three points, two double answers would be awarded. Each entrant's hand-icap would be added to the gross number of points to give the final net score.

Professor Prais would be happy to step in smartly to fill the breach, but so far the members of the working group have been singularly reluctant to jump to judgement. Perhaps Mr Duncan Graham, their new chairman, can galvanize them more successfully than Professor Bin-Stoyle (who must be enormously glad to be shot of this responsibility), but the gap between them and Professor Prais is very wide indeed. If the group could be persuaded to set out a basic syllabus it would certainly not be confined to elementary arithmetic.

Mr Baker has made no secret of his disappointment and urged the group to tackle with urgency the questions of age-related attainment targets and a frame of reference by which to measure progress. He seems to share Professor Prais's distrust of calculators and refers to the need to determine the balance between "open-ended problem solving... and more traditional pencil and paper practice of skills and techniques".

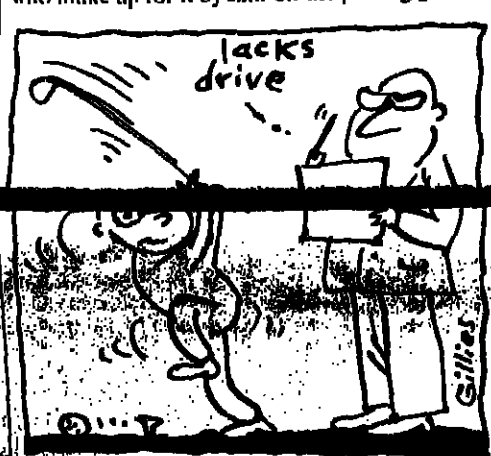
Mr Baker must have been relieved to have had a mainly positive response from the science working group (held up to the maths group as a model) and it is understood the task group on assessment and testing has produced a helpful document which will soon be passing across his desk. But what is now happening over maths is likely to happen in other curriculum areas when what Mr Baker wants to hear is sharply at odds

used to revise their individual handicaps - up or down - which would go forward with them to secondary school. An important consequence of the handicapping system would be to enable pupils to compete against themselves. Getting your handicap down would be a measure of progress. Having it increased would be evidence of deterioration.

It would also be important to grade schools according to the difficulty of their circumstances, in the same way that golf courses are assessed according to their length and other characteristics, in order to give each its own 'standard scratch score'.

Each school would have to be similarly graded according to an assessment of social factors relevant to pupil performance, on a scale running from 1 (for the most advantageous) to 10 (for the most difficult). A combination of the standard scratch grading, and the net performances of the pupils (after allowing for handicap) would provide an index of the schools' efficiency - or value added or lost.

Some will suggest that each pupil should be handicapped for each subject or area of experience. But given the intention to introduce a broad and balanced, 10-subject, curriculum this is not necessary. A pupil must be allowed to compensate by success in one subject for weakness in another. After all, we are all familiar with players who are inclined to be wayward off the tee, but who make up for it by skill on the putting green.



The handicap figure will become particularly useful for selection purposes. Minimum university and polytechnic entrance requirements will be expressed in terms of a handicap mark linked to particular A levels or forms of experience.

Some will object to the simplicity of the system and fear undesirable consequences, in that it would force many people to go through high handicap players. But what, after all, is wrong with this? You've got to do something to teach people their limitations or they'll all enter for the Open Championships.

And anyway, is it not a bit late to complain about national testing will result in official grading, that students and young adults will carry this all over wherever they go? Is not that the ideal of the golfing circles we are more robust about these things. We know that you cannot have a combination of success without, per contra,

If golf is any guide, the true benefit will accrue in motivation and commitment, as in the well-known case of the high handicap player whose partner collapsed and died on the 10th hole. When he got to the club house, the body of his friend on his shoulders, he was praised by the Secretary for his devotion in carrying the body the way back. 'Aye', said the man 'it was but the worst part was putting him down and picking him up again, every time I played on the back nine'."

## IN BRIEF

### Students get 4 per cent rise

Student grants will be increased by four per cent in 1988 in line with the Government's inflation rate forecast of 3.75 per cent. The rise coincides with the Government's published response to the Education, Science and Arts Committee's report on grants.

It says the Government is considering a part-time system for students. Increases in student numbers are making a larger call on public funds than it is reasonable to expect the taxpayer to meet, says the document.

### Fewer teachers

The latest education statistics show there were 3,000 fewer teachers in 1986/87 than in the previous year. A total of 468,000 lecturers and teachers were employed as compared with 471,000 previously.

There was an improvement in pupil/teacher ratios in the secondary sector from 16:1 in 1983/84 to 15:2 last year. The ratio in primary schools remained at 22:1.

Education Statistics for the United Kingdom, 1987 edition, is available from HMSO Publications Centre, PO Box 276, London SW8 5DT. price £7.95.

### Support grants

Education support grants of £115.5m for English local education authorities were announced by Mr Kenneth Baker last week. About £10m will be devoted to information technology projects. Over £40m will be provided to pay for midday supervision.

An additional £10m has been allocated for the OCSE on top of the £24m already awarded. The grants are 10 per cent of approved projects and will be used to fund the rest from the school support grant.

### AS recognition

Universities have agreed to recognize AS levels through "exhaustion rather than conversion". Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, Universities Council chairman, said last week. In a speech to the Society for Research in Higher Education conference, he said the argument that broader sixth-form studies would lead to a four-year degree was "unconvincing". The four-year degree was inconceivable because universities do not have the money to pay for it.

### Smoked out

Senior pupils at a Lancashire public school have been expelled for running an extortion racket. Two sixth-formers, at Bassall School, Fleetwood, were ordered to leave within six hours of younger boys reporting them. The 18-year-olds had been forcing younger pupils to buy them cigarettes.

### Capital increase

Mr Kenneth Baker has announced a 24 per cent increase in allocations to local education authorities for capital spending on buildings and equipment for schools and colleges. The allocation for 1988/89 totals £369 million.

### Sporting gesture

Over 750,000 pupils from 3,000 schools ran a 100m race organized by Sport Aid '88. The £500,000 raised by the Third World charity is earmarked for children in Africa and Latin America.

### Select criticism

Mr Timothy Raison MP is to chair the House of Commons Education, Science and Arts Select Committee. A former Overseas Aid Minister, Mr Raison is known to be critical of parts of the Education Reform Bill, particularly the proposal to allow schools to opt out of local authority control.

### Spending error

North Tyneside spends £55.60p per pupil on books and equipment for secondary school pupils - not £14.90p as stated in the latest statistics from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and reported on December 4.

## NEWS

### Welsh defender behind bars

Ms Lyn Mererid, the Welsh language activist, is spending Christmas behind bars because she refuses to pay a fine for spraying slogans on a public building last year. She comes from a family that may be unique in its linguistic diversity, writes Brian Morgan.

Ms Mererid offered herself for arrest, along with fellow protesters who had sprayed slogans on the walls of the Welsh Joint Education Committee in Cardiff in their campaign for a Welsh language development agency.

Her two children, Anna, aged three, and Gwenno, six, will be looked after by her husband, Tim Saunders, who fully supports her bid to protect the Welsh language. He himself is fluent in Cornish - a language which he discovered at the age of seven when his family moved to Cornwall.

As Ms Mererid speaks Welsh to the children and both parents speak Cornish to each other, their family is somewhat unusual. The children converse in Welsh, the language of the two schools they attend. They also speak English naturally, because - as Mr Saunders explained - it is simply all around them.

Mr Saunders was born in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1952 to a cleric father and teacher mother of Irish origin. The home was filled with languages: Greek, Latin, Hebrew, French and Gaelic.

Now he lives in the ethnically-mixed riverside community in Cardiff where such languages as Gujarati, Urdu, Greek, Italian, Chinese as well as English and Welsh and his own children's Cornish can be heard as he walks the children to school.



## Teachers who strike face threat to pensions

by Jeremy Sutcliffe

The Government is to penalize teachers who go on strike by altering their pension rights. As a result, a teacher who earns £12,000 a year, and who goes on strike for one day, will have to pay a minimum £154.50 to protect his or her pension.

Under the change, announced at the weekend by Mr Kenneth Baker, teachers who strike will only be able to make up missing pension contributions if they make back payments of at least 30 days.

At present, a teacher's pension is made up by employee's and employer's contributions, which amount to 15.45 per cent of his or her salary. For a teacher who earns £1,000 a month, that means £154.50.

Because the changes apply to short bursts of strike action, as well as prolonged strikes, they throw into doubt any future rounds of rolling guerrilla strikes, which have been favoured by the teachers' two largest unions in recent years.

At present, striking teachers can immediately protect their pensions by paying the employers' and employees' contributions for the days they are on strike.

Teachers who are absent for reasons not connected with trade disputes will not be affected by the changes. The changes are subject to one month's contributions, including the Christmas period. The Education Secretary expects the new regulations to come into force next April.

The changes are labelled "vindictive" this week by Mr Fred Jarvis, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers.

Mr Peter Dawson, general secretary of the non-striking Professional Association of Teachers, also condemned the decision as "unreasonable and punitive".

"This is the season of goodwill and I would have thought it is not the time for the Secretary of State to start clobbering teachers in this way. It could well make matters worse," he said.

A spokesman for Haringey said he thought the problems of the two authorities were broadly similar. A tight rein on spending had meant vacant adviser posts and an inability to cope with the DES monitoring and returns system.

The injection of funds will allow local authorities to spend £290 million on training next year compared with £265 million in 1987/88 - a 9 per cent increase. L.e.s. are expected to spend £134 million on training in national priority areas which are supported with a 70 per cent Government grant. Training for local needs attracts a 50 per cent grant, and local authorities are expected to spend £154 million.

## THREE GOLD RINGS

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## COMMENT

### MARKING TIME ON MATHS

Some will see the débâcle by the Mathematics Working Group (page 6) as Mr Kenneth Baker's come-uppance for setting a disparate group of more and less expert professionals an impossible task in double-quick time. Mathematics was thought to be one of the easiest subjects for the architects of the national curriculum. After all, people said, the Cockcroft committee did all the ground work. In Mathematics Counts, Sir Wilfred and his colleagues set down their "bottom-up" approach which achieved a high degree of acceptance among maths teachers and advisers and HM Inspectorate.

Why did Professor Roger Bin-Stoyle's group find their task so difficult? For two main reasons: their heart, clearly, wasn't in the task; and they insisted in ranging at length over the whole topic of maths teaching, rather than focus on attainment targets and programmes of study.

Professor Sig Prais, on the other hand, in his Note of Dissent makes many of the noises which Mr Baker would like to have heard. It has all along been his contention that the bottom 40 per cent of English/Welsh pupils underperform to a marked degree by comparison with the Germans, and that this flows directly from the failure to specify a narrower, more clearly defined, content of study. He argues for "numeracy", which he interprets as basic arithmetic. An example he quotes concerns the division of fractions which the Germans expect from their "secondary modern" pupils: here these tasks are "thought inappropriate" for the bottom 40 per cent, and do not appear on the Cockcroft foundation list.

The scope for argument is endless, but if Mr Baker is to have his programmes of study, someone will have to draw the line. No doubt



Don't be alarmed madam - they're not real.

## NO COMMENT

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## PLATFORM



Victorian experience shows us that educational intervention has little short-term potential as an antidote for economic decline

# 'Elementary, my dear Holmes'

A scapegoat for economic

and respectable lineage - past generations experiencing economic decline were blessed with similar flashes of insight, each time claiming a breakthrough in solving their problems. Thus in 1910 Magnus wrote:

"The recognition that school curricula have something to do with the progress of the nation and the prospects of Empire... is a considerable step in advance of the view of the last generation and it is the perception of this fact which makes educational reform a truly national affair."

In the prewar period - to which Magnus refers - it can be readily established that the causes of economic decline centred on the increasing deficiencies in the industrial structure and in the trading pattern of the nation. In such situations, flailing with the educational system cannot halt economic decline as those who worked in the coal, steel and shipbuilding industries in the 1930s will testify. Similarly, in contemporary Britain, the ingredients of a failing economic system are inevitably to be identified largely within the economic system itself.

Educational intervention has little short-term potential as an antidote for economic decline. Plainly the long-term objectives of economic and social regeneration must involve educational reform: a better educated population working in a better organized economy provide mutually supportive prerequisites of economic success.

In scrutinizing the arguments for government intervention in school syllabuses, I want to point to a previous episode when this was actually attempted. The historical period and many of the actual details of the intervention are quite distinct from anything currently envisaged. They do, however, point up the possible dangers in too detailed intervention in school syllabuses.

The Lower Revised Code was applied in 1862 in elementary schools. From then until 1895 a major part of the grant received by each school was paid on the results of yearly examination held by HM Inspectorate on a detailed syllabus, formulated by the Government and binding on all schools.

In 1911 Edmond Holmes, a former Chief Inspector of Schools, wrote a devastating critique in his book *What is and What Might Be*. First, he was concerned about the effect on the

could provide a dangerous return to the past, rather than a break-through to the future

teachers. On the official report of the yearly examination depended the reputation and financial prosperity of the school.

The consequent pressure on the teacher was well-nigh irresistible: he had no choice but to transmit the pressure to his subordinates and his pupils. The result was that in those days the average school was a hive of industry.

So far, so good. "It was also a hive of misdirected energy." The impact on the teacher was passed on to the pupils.

"What the department did to the

over the secondary school curriculum - besides, they would say, the problems are merely short-term, a transitional psychological problem for teachers and taught. So long as there would be those who would question any similarities with the historical episode described - this is the 20th century and we are not talking of re-establishing the Lower Revised Code. In saying this they would, of course, be strictly correct. But as was pointed out at the beginning, the intention is merely to draw attention to the potential problems inherent in detailed government intervention in school curricula. Here Holmes was clear about the essential timelessness of the problem. After all, he said:

"It is not only because mechanical obedience is fatal in the long run, to mental and spiritual growth, that the regulation of elementary or any other grade of education by a uniform syllabus is to be deprecated. It is also because a uniform syllabus is, in the nature of things, a bad syllabus, and because the degree of its business varies directly with the area of the sphere of educational activity that comes under its control."

In arguing that the problem was not specific to any historical period but recurrent, Holmes was aware that the syllabuses issued by the department in the late 19th century were "a grotesque blend of tragedy and farce". But he warned that the problem was not merely to do with the passing inadequacies of the Government department, but was much more fundamental.

"Let us of the enlightened Twentieth Century try our hands at constructing a syllabus and in so doing entrust the drafting of schemes of work in the various subjects to a committee of the wisest and most experienced educationalists in England."

Holmes was quite sure the resultant syllabus would be a dismal failure. In our contemporary schools, the imposition of a series of "core" syllabuses defined by the Government with the education of the innovative, but deviant, Mode 3 examinations would

fall straight into the trap Holmes defines. For in framing their schemes, these wise and experienced educationalists would find themselves compelled to take account of the lowest rather than of the highest level of actual educational achievement. What is exceptional and experimental cannot possibly find a place in a syllabus which is to bind all schools and all teachers alike, and which must therefore be so framed that the least capable teacher, working under the least favourable conditions,

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"The state, in prescribing syllabuses which was to be followed by all schools, was guilty of one offence. It told him in precise detail what he was to do each year in each subject, and how far he was to go in it; what width of ground he was to cover; what amount of knowledge; what degree of accuracy was required for a 'pass'. In other words it provided him with his ideal, his general conceptions, his more immediate aims, his schemes of work."

"The growing impotence of the teacher was the expense of increased government power - educational criteria sacrificed to political imperatives. Hence, it was inevitable that in his endeavour to adapt his teaching to the type of examination which his experience of the examination told him to expect, he should gradually deliver himself, mind and soul, into the hands of the officials of the department."

One stream of government policy in recent years has seen detailed intervention in school curricula as a way of arresting or reversing the economic decline. As a discipline this policy seems to be treating the wrong part of the patient's problem when the patient has tuberculosis.

On top of this the folly is compounded by the manner of treatment. The measures against government intervention warn us of uniform curriculum, curriculum implementation through detailed syllabus guidelines, the common denominator of such exercises.

In our state schools we have a variety of abilities, motivations, social characteristics. A starting point for achieving any common aim or "cores" with such a pupil population would be the acceptance that different strategies will be required in different classrooms. These strategies will be amendable to uniform objectives, but above for they depend on the individual working knowledge of local conditions and the individual teacher's specialisms.

Ivor Goodson is professor of education at the University of Warwick

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## Tipping the scales

For me, to quote the great Jacobean playwright, John Webster, "is a right whole. If she give ought, she deals it in small parcels. That she may take it away all at one swoop."

This, or something like it, is what poor old Bob Richardson, doyen of the Salopian wing of the National Union of Teachers, must have felt when he heard about the nominations for next year's national executive committee. Conrade Bob, you'll remember, was being tipped just a couple of months ago as the man who might take over from Fred Jarvis as the union's general secretary. His name was being put forward by shadowy figures who were trying to launch a "Stop MoAvoy" campaign in the great succession race.

As we all know now, that campaign backfired. Now I hear he has not even been nominated for next year's national executive committee. Like Webster's stage villain, as far as NUT politics is concerned, he's "caught an everlasting cold".

It is to be an exit (stage left or right, I am not quite sure, since he was the *bleu* not of the Left in the Inner London Teachers' Association and on the Broad Left of the executive) from union politics for him? Watch this space.

Meanwhile, talking of the ILTA, earth and goodwill to all. We have agreed to support the official industrial action over cover, in exchange for support in fighting job cuts proposed by the Inner London Education Authority.

After all the years of infighting between ILTA and the NUT executive, the celebrations went on long into the night.

## Running total

Big pit on the back for the pupils and staff at Helen's RC primary school in Bolton who raised £1,000 for the charity Cystic Fibrosis, simply by running round and round the Crystal Palace.

It happened back in November when the ILTA organized a sponsored half-marathon to raise the cash to bring some cheer to a lot of people who don't normally have much to celebrate.

The ILTA has many enemies but should be given credit for that effort on behalf of the homeless. And even more credit should go to Bill Stobbs, its chief officer, who thought of it in the first place.

Dr Stubbs also put his feet where his mouth is (I think that's the right expression) and completed the 13-plus miles in a very reasonable time. Further congratulations to Ruxley Manor Primary in Eltham who collected £838. And as this is Christmas week a little bit of self-congratulation is in order. We at *The TES* put on our running shorts and hunted round the course raising just over a £1,000.

Thank you to everyone who took part - £28,000 was collected and as you read this someone, somewhere, will be benefiting from your effort and generosity.

## Misted up

Anything that encourages primary science must be a good thing, since it will lead to more scientifically literate schools. That is the aim of the latest science initiative, which aims to clarify scientific thinking among the young. Modular investigations in Science and Technology. Shame about the acronym.

## Acronym

There was no doubt that a head had a major responsibility in setting high standards and initiating rapid action. But Mr Hart added: "A new person should be put in charge, as a last

Barry Hugill reports on work ahead for the MPs discussing the Education Reform Bill

## Slow march to the guillotine

I hope that the 31 MPs currently serving on the Education Reform Bill Committee get a lot of sleep over the Christmas recess. For the next two months they will work at least two late nights a week as they dutifully pore over each and every clause.

They are not quick workers. After 10 hours of discussion they were still on the first clause with 147 to go. At that rate of progress, the infamous guillotine will come into operation some time in February with the committee having discussed only a small portion of the Bill.

The slow progress is the reason for the late nights. The MPs meet morning, afternoon and evening every Tuesday and Thursday. The evening sessions have been finishing at about 11pm but that could soon change as the all-night sittings come.

Both Government and Opposition want as much discussion as possible. If the Government is seen to delay or cut discussion too brutally, it could face problems in the House of Lords.

A substantial section of the Bill is guillotined in committee the peers could insist on working through those clauses not examined by the MPs. And to complicate matters for the Government, there is no procedure to cut discussion in the Lords: if their lordships get uppity there is not a lot that can be done about it.

Although Labour has much to gain from the imposition of a guillotine - it can claim the Government is trying to suppress debate - it cannot be seen to be deliberately holding up discussion in committee, thus providing the Government with a ready-made excuse to impose a limit.

Mr Jack Straw, Labour's education spokesman, is blaming the Tories for this. "We are all working very hard," he says. "We are all working very hard."

I am not sure that this is true. For his part Mr Straw has been brief and to the

point in discussion - living up to his reputation as a skilled parliamentary performer. This is not the case with all of his colleagues.

Mr Brian Seligman, the maverick left-wing Labour MP, took up 25 minutes at one Committee meeting with a discourse on the meaning of life. He took in Aristotle, Sophocles and the late Canon Bennett in a speech that examined the nature of married life, the theological split in the Anglican church, the nature of sexuality and much more. Entertaining in parts, it sounded very much like a filibuster. Why he should want to filibuster I do not know nor, I suspect, do his Labour colleagues.

A fair amount of time has also been taken up by Dr Dafydd Elis Thomas, Plaid Cymru MP for Merionnydd Nant Conwy. Dr Thomas is quite reasonably concerned at the impact of the Bill on Wales and has tabled a number of amendments.

A quietly-spoken man, he is listened to with respect by both sides, but his analytical, reasoned approach does not lend itself to brevity.

An added problem is the Parliamentary convention that MPs are never addressed by name but their constituency. Dr Thomas is a mouthful for most of the English members. It is also difficult for the new members who are not familiar with the constituencies of their colleagues. Confusion arises from time to time with Tory Dr Keith Hampson and Labour's Derek Fatchett, both of whom represent Leeds seats. On at least one occasion Mr Fatchett, the member for Leeds Central, has been referred to as the member for Leeds East. Whether he is flattered to be mistaken for Mr Denis Healey is not clear.

Mr Seligman's discourse was with the guillotine. He was speaking only to the rhetorical Paddy Ashdown in the oratorical stakes.

The Education Secretary is far and



Jack Straw: skilled

away the most impressive performer on the Government side. Love or hate him, he is the man everybody would be happy to have in their team. He cannot be ruled.

When he is in committee one senses that the Tory back-benchers know they have little to fear.

He is, however, not always present and his Minister of State, Mrs Angela Rumbold, is not having a pleasant time leading in his absence. He does not get flustered: she does. She appears to have difficulty handling interjections or questions. Speaking in a brief she is competent - take it away and she flounders.

So far there has been little sign of back-bench Tory dissent. There are two potential rebels, Dr Hampson and Mr Robert Key, MP for Salisbury and an adviser to the Assistant Masters and Mistresses' Association. Dr Hampson is a member of the Association, Dr Key is not.

Mr Key, although "broadly supportive" of the Government, has reservations over the national curriculum. He



Angela Rumbold: flustered

says the idea is fine, but flawed unless more teachers are recruited in the foundation subjects.

At some point in the committee amendment allowing local authorities to charge for field trips and such like. It will also introduce a clause to outlaw "bogus" degrees. It looks as if they will be the only two major changes to come out of the Committee.

Brian Sedgmore: flustered

says the idea is fine, but flawed unless more teachers are recruited in the foundation subjects.

## Failure to prevent vandalism could jeopardize heads' jobs

by Linda Blackburne

Schools where vandalism is rife may need a change of leadership, says a DES Building Bulletin published last week.

Security and school design are important, says the report, but having a committed leader is even more crucial. *Crime Prevention in Schools: Practical Guidance* contains references to heads' responsibility for vandalism which have shocked the Secondary Heads Association and the National Association of Head Teachers.

The booklet says that between 5 and 10 per cent of local education authorities' school maintenance budgets is spent on repairing vandalism.

Nationally, the cost of vandalism is between £25 and £30 million although exact figures are difficult to calculate. This yields an estimated cost per pupil of £3.40.

The report says good management is a key to preventing vandalism and discusses whether headteachers should go on management training courses.

It continues: "A headteacher is needed who sets high standards and initiates rapid action. This appears to be so crucial that where schools are seen to be in decline the first preventive measure on behalf of the authority may be to put a new person in charge."

Miss Shirley Chapman, one of SHA's deputy general secretaries, said: "Our association would feel that there was very much more that should be done than just speaking the head." The SHA's general secretary, said: "The report, which was put together by a steering committee without teacher representatives, provides a simplistic set of solutions."

There was no doubt that a head had a major responsibility in setting high standards and initiating rapid action. But Mr Hart added: "A new person should be put in charge, as a last

preventive measure."

The report "presupposed that the head could wave a magic wand", said Mr Hart. "We must find ourselves getting into the great difficulties with recruitment. People are not going to take on a job if they feel their futures are at risk as a result of factors beyond their control."

But Mr Hart said he thought heads were not sufficiently well acquainted with security measures.

The report also concludes that:

□ A great deal of vandalism, theft and arson is preventable;

□ Many authorities introduce hardware to solve the problem when the cost-effective solutions are management initiatives and good house-keeping;

□ The importance of good management and the question of training courses for heads;

□ Few authorities targeted resources based on an analysis of the relative risk of vandalism;

□ The value of exchange of information and forums such as the North East Schools Security Group.

Mr Bob Dunn, education junior minister, has said damage to schools can be prevented by combining good design with sensible security and good management. He sees the booklet as a blueprint for future work.

Mr Dunn said: "We cannot afford to allow a wicked waste of resources on this scale due to the stupid, vindictive actions of a small minority."

He went on: "It is appalling that three out of a hundred English schools suffer a malicious fire each year. We must all be very concerned about the distressing impact on the life of these schools which in many ways is worse than the physical damage."

Poor outlook: vandalism accounts for between 5 and 10 per cent of l.e.a.s' maintenance budgets

## Unions' response to reforms criticized

A former president of the Association of University Teachers has criticized the education unions for "failing to get their act together" over the Government's Reform Bill.

Dr Andrew Taylor, of Liverpool University, questioned why the unions had not organized a joint protest against the Education Bill. "Why are we relying on the National Union of Students to declare a day of action?" he asked, referring to the rally the NUS is holding in London in February.

Dr Taylor, who was speaking at the AUT's winter council in Hull, also attacked university vice-chancellors for failing to speak out effectively. Why had there been no letters to the press from "the great and the good" in higher education? he asked.

The council, in what observers describe as an unprecedented display of unity, unanimously passed motions condemning the Government's proposals.

But the dons' main attack was on the issue of academic freedom. This, they argue, is threatened by Mr Kenneth Baker's decision to end academic tenure. So far the Education Secretary has resisted calls for a guarantee of academics' right to free speech to be written into the Bill.

Earlier, the union's new president, Dr Ekkehard Kopp, of Hull University, accused the Government of a "naked assertion of state power". The Bill showed the Government was unable to tolerate an independent, critical university system, and was attempting to destroy all vestiges of academic freedom, he said.



Poor outlook: vandalism accounts for between 5 and 10 per cent of l.e.a.s' maintenance budgets



## NEWS



The Government's working group on maths teaching has aroused the wrath of the Education Secretary. Its interim report—along with a critical letter from Mr Baker and the announcement of its chairman's resignation—were published last week. Ian Nash reports



Calculated risk: Professor Prais feels calculators can often be used at the expense of mental calculations

## Anodyne report angers Minister

Some aspects of mathematics would be better taught in technology and art classes, according to the national curriculum maths working group report that has aroused the fury of the Education Secretary.

Among the few decisive statements in the otherwise woolly report are assertions that calculators should be more widely used in primary maths than the Cockerford Report suggested, and "testing" of young children should be limited to classroom observation. Neglect of mathematics by other subject teachers during project work

In a letter to the working party chairman, Professor Roger Blin-Stoyle, whose resignation for "personal reasons" accompanied the publication of the report, Mr Baker said the chapter on attainment targets "offers scarcely any discussion of how the group's approach will deliver age-related targets which can be attempted and assessed at a range of levels".

He was angry at their failure to give teachers, parents and pupils a clear frame of reference by which to measure progress. "In its future work I want the group to tackle this with a

continuing development should hold the group back from recommending attainment targets and programmes of study based on research evidence currently available and information about good existing practice."

Despite the claimed lack of time, the working party has recommended that assessment be broad, reflect good practice and enable pupils to demonstrate "what they know rather than what they don't know".

The report also sees "great merit" in assessments taking the form of a "mathematical profile" rather than a

list of abilities towards other bodies (he is chairman of the School Curriculum Development Committee). I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that I can no longer carry the heavy load involved."

Mr Duncan Graham, the former Suffolk chief education officer and pioneer of teacher appraisal, is to replace him. Mr Graham is now chief executive with Humberside County Council.

National Curriculum: Mathematics Working Group, Interim Report, is available from the Department of Education, 100 Whitehall, London SE1 7PH.

● The DES-funded feasibility study by Dr Margaret Brown and others (see TES November 27 1987) which concluded that attainment targets could be devised and given sufficient time, would play a valuable role in raising standards, has also been published.

The findings of the report are now being considered by the mathematics working group.

Attainment Targets and Assessment in the Primary Phase, report of the mathematics feasibility study, is also available on request from the DES.

open-ended practical "problem-solving" approaches and the more traditional pencil and paper practice of important skills and techniques.

In chapter 1 of their interim report the group anticipate the need for further work after they have made their final report, including research and development. The group are quite right to identify the need for continuing development of the mathematics curriculum: it cannot stand still. However, curriculum development across all core and foundation subjects will be a central function of the National Curriculum Council and the Curriculum Council for Wales. I see no reason why the prospect of continuing development should hold the group back from recommending attainment targets and programmes of study based on research evidence currently available and information about existing good practice.

I have attempted in this letter to bring out the essential elements of the group's task. I hope that this clarification will enable the group to make faster progress on the vital and urgent work on which they are engaged. It would be helpful to have an indication from the chairman around the end of February in respect of progress made.

I am grateful to members of the group for the considerable time and effort they have devoted to the exercise and I appreciate that it will make continuing demands on their time during the next six months.

I am sending copies of this letter to all members of the mathematics group and to the new chairman, Duncan Graham.

Teachers can have access to expensive products such as computer software packages.

Bulth and Gwynedd assessed the

## Dissident urges start to testing at seven

Age-related testing of all seven-year-olds should be introduced without delay, says Professor Sir Prais of the National Institute for Economic and Social Research.

A member of the national curriculum mathematics working group, he has published a "note of dissent" in which he condemns the group's "astonishing lack of urgency" on testing.

Tests already exist for core subjects at various ages and, while not perfect, they should be implemented now and modified later, he says.

"If the group continues on its present lines it could take a very long time before the national curriculum and first tests are effectively put to nationwide use," he says in a direct attack on another member, Dr Margaret Brown, who said recently that effective tests could take years to devise and put into effect.

His note of dissent criticizes the interim report for failing to address sufficiently the problem of raising standards. He is also alarmed by the alleged lack of consideration for the "appalling attainment gap" between British children and their overseas peers.

Syllabuses are too broad and yet the expectations in specific tasks are too low. For example, the division of fractions which the lowest two-thirds of the ability range achieve in West Germany is thought "inappropriate for the lowest 40 per cent here," he said.

And since high standards of numeracy were a prerequisite for further education courses to train electricians and mechanics, colleges must set prohibitively high entrance requirements to ensure that students have the required levels of numeracy.

"Consequently, a very much greater proportion of the workforce—in fact, a majority—is able to reach at least craftsman-status in France, Germany and Japan."

Professor Prais attributes the standards of industrial training entirely to the broad, ill-disciplined and nebulous school maths curriculum. "The success of German Japanese schooling in mathematics, I believe, largely attributed to a more sharply for each class."

He makes no apologies for his vocational stance and says while the group failed to represent the needs of the parents and employers, he did not think about what we are going to do in mathematics, joining among other teachers.

Copies of the report are available from Powys County Council, 10 Lindens, Spa Road, Llanidloes, Wells.

Below we publish the full text of the Education Secretary's letter to Professor Roger Blin-Stoyle

Dear Professor Blin-Stoyle

Thank you for your letter of November 30 covering the interim report of the mathematics working group.

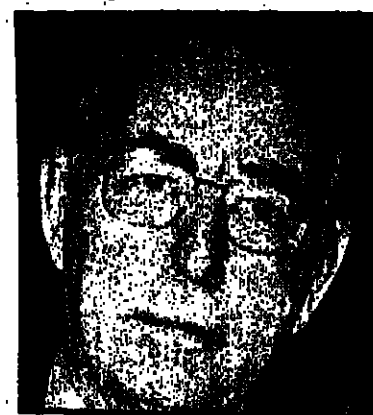
I am grateful to the group for the careful thought it has given to the importance of fostering positive attitudes to mathematics (chapter 2 of the report) and to the nature of mathematical activity (chapter 3). I am, however, disappointed that the group has not made more progress in their thinking about attainment targets and programmes of study.

In particular, chapter 4 on attainment targets offers scarcely any discussion of how the group's approach will deliver age-related targets which can be attempted and assessed at a range of levels to cover pupils of different abilities and maturities. Indeed, the group seem to envisage the same attainment targets applying to all ages from 5 to 16. I have to say that I regard it as essential to establish a clear structure of age-related targets in order to give teachers, parents and pupils a clear frame of reference against which to measure progress. I understand that pupils of the same age can exhibit a wide range of mathematical ability. And I have said that I want to avoid setting qualitatively different targets in terms of areas of knowledge, skills or understanding for children of different ability. But within common targets, accessible to all pupils, it should be possible to specify the normal range of attainment at the key age points. In its further work, I want the group to tackle this as a matter of urgency. The science group's interim report offers

one model of an approach to this problem.

In returning to the formulation of attainment targets, I want the group to think carefully about the balance between areas of mathematics. I accept that areas of mathematics are inter-related and that pupils need a broad mathematical education without undue emphasis on any one area. However, it does not follow that all areas should have equal weight in the curriculum. The group themselves have said in chapter 3 of their report that "number forms an essential and central part of school mathematics". This must be right: our priority for the majority of pupils up to the age of 16 must be to ensure that they are equipped at least with a basic numerical competence. I was therefore surprised that the group's exemplification of attainment targets in chapter 4 offered no examples for number. In its further work I shall expect the group to give priority to developing targets designed to ensure that pupils have a secure foundation and confidence in the understanding and use of numbers.

It will also be essential for the group to address the role of calculators and other new technology in the mathematics curriculum. I note the group's view (chapter 3) that early access to calculators can help pupils understand number and that attainment targets for number should take the calculator fully into account. It will be important for the group's final report to offer a substantive discussion of the issues to which the availability of cheap, but increasingly powerful and sophisticated, calculators give rise. On the one hand they can be a learning aid and pupils need instruction in their correct use; on the other, they can be a crutch for



Professor Blin-Stoyle: no longer in favour

In the world of work. On the other hand, it must be important that pupils themselves understand and are proficient in the various mathematical operations that can now be done electronically. Your final report will need to recognize the risks as well as the opportunities which calculators in the classroom offer.

The programmes of study for mathematics will follow from the attainment targets which the group establishes. They should include a common element for all pupils, specified in some detail and reflecting basic levels of attainment. Beyond this, the programmes of study should comprise a "broader" mapping of the full range of attainment expected within the attainment targets. In developing the programmes of study the group will need to consider and justify the use of activities (as exemplified) were asked to develop collaborative programmes

## PHOTO REPORT

Deck the hall with boughs of holly—and let's show them what we can do! As the nation prepares to subside en masse before the small screen for the now traditional pre-packaged Yuletide, schools everywhere have been celebrating the glorious diversity of live entertainment. Here are a few examples of seasonal concerts, plays and festivals in progress.



Putting the 'T' in Christmas by King's Heath Infants School, Birmingham



Long Will Comprehensive in East Sussex held a Saxon feast of burgers



Stockwell Juniors lived up the ILEA carol festival



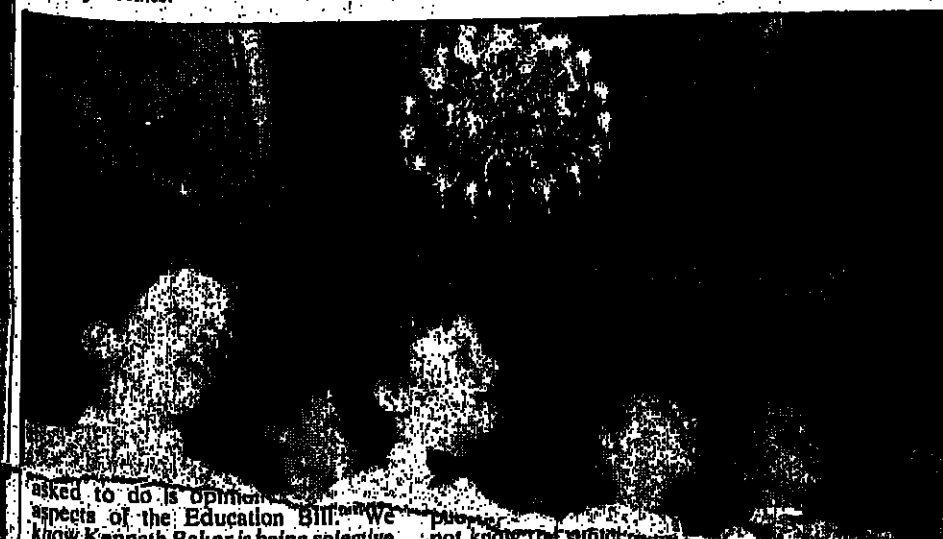
St Andrew's Infants School in South London had a mobile tree—no messy needles



Making up to perform "Miracle" by Moss Ambrase, head of drama at Grady School, Leeds



The staff of Our Lady & St Francis School, Glasgow, endured a day of role reversal



asked to do is opinion polls. We know Kenneth Baker is being selective in his use of opinion polls. We want to know the subject, not know the union," he says.



Decor for a carol festival in Dorchester Abbey



## SCHOOL TO WORK

## Smaller MSC distributes largess

Despite the Government's drastic pruning of its activities, the Manpower Services Commission is to remain the nation's big spender. Its budget for next year totals nearly £3 billion.

The MSC corporate plan published this week, the last before its name is changed to the National Training Commission to reflect its reduced role, indicates that the agency is losing nearly half its staff. They work in the employment services, once the MSC's prime function, which are being returned to the Department of Employment.

But although the employment services, which include the Job Centres, have many junior staff, they cost far less to run than the MSC's training activities. Between them, the Youth Training Scheme and the Community Programme (to be absorbed into the new adult training programme) accounted for two-thirds of last year's total budgeted expenditure of £3,032 million.

Next year's estimated spending is down to £2,950 million, but is planned to rise again to well above £3 billion in 1988/9 and to continue to climb in the following two years. Staffing is to drop from the old level of just under 34,000 to 12,000 by next spring, with a further small reduction in the following year. Reflecting the reduction in the scope of the Commission's responsibilities, the plan makes little attempt to set out a strategy for combating unemployment. It states that the Commission's role over the five years the plan covers will be to help improve the country's competitiveness and support employment growth by fostering the development of a better-trained and more adaptable workforce.

The Commission says that the New Training Initiative objectives - apprenticeship and occupational training



reform; full-time education or training at work experience for all up to 18; and the opening up of training opportunities to adults - will go on being the centre of its vocational education and training strategy. And it is in pursuit of the NTL objectives that the Commission feels it has a growing part to play in the schools system. It defines as one of its priorities for the next five years helping to develop more relevant and practical curricula and teaching approaches which have

Estimated MSC expenditure at cash prices

	1986/87	1987/88	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91
Youth Training Scheme	£40.2	£1,115.6	£1,227.7	£1,233.7	£1,264.5
Community industry scheme	25.0	28.5	27.3	28.0	28.7
Adult & Occupational Training	317.1	489.5	541.9	565.8	589.7
Community Programme	1,068.0	1,071.0	1,174.1	1,205.4	1,235.8
Voluntary Projects Programme	14.5	12.9	12.7	13.0	13.3
Employment rehabilitation	18.6	25.4	23.4	23.4	25.4
Non Advanced Further Education	112.7	115.4	118.3	121.2	124.2
Technical & Vocational Education Initiative	72.0	60.4	63.8	109.5	112.2
STEPS	5.0				
General employment services	120.3				
Rearbit	49.9				
Sheltered employment	83.2				
Enterprise Allowance Scheme	150.3				
Geographical Mobility	3.4				
Other employment services	16.9				
Professional and Executive Recruitment	0.5				
<b>TOTAL PROGRAMMES</b>	<b>2,999.1</b>	<b>2,916.6</b>	<b>3,206.2</b>	<b>3,280.0</b>	<b>3,372.2</b>
Skills Training Agency	-4.7	-5.9	-6.2	-5.4	-5.5
Support Services	38.0	39.7	39.8	39.4	40.4
<b>TOTAL MSC</b>	<b>3,032.4</b>	<b>2,950.4</b>	<b>3,242.8</b>	<b>3,324.0</b>	<b>3,407.1</b>

These services were transferred to the Department of Employment in Autumn 1987.

industry's confidence "through the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative and in the light of the requirements of the proposed national curriculum".

Among its other priorities are helping:

- to set up a coherent national framework of standards-based vocational qualifications; and
- in the development of a coherent vocational education and training structure so that all young people can

get a recognized qualification for employment.

It also aims to:

- encourage "employers and individuals" to invest in training;
- help industry and individuals to make the best use of vocational education and training provision;
- continue to improve the responsiveness of vocational education and training to local and national needs; and
- identify and help industry to meet key skill requirements and reduce skill shortages.

## But industry keeps its wallet closed

The Government's confident belief that the universities can look to businessmen for a significant part of their funding was put sharply into perspective last week.

Ms Daphne Park, the former diplomat who is now principal of Somerville College, pointed out to an audience of senior industrialists that she had provided only £2 million out of the £30 million that Oxford got from non-government sources last year.

Ms Park, who was delivering the BP lecture at the Royal Society of Arts, turned the screw by reporting that, even at this figure, Oxford was said to be getting five times as much as the average university.

Ms Park said she hoped that this would change. "I know that industry feels, with some justice perhaps, that it is being asked to pay for basic research which ought to be paid for by the Government. Unfortunately, it is only too likely that if industry does not pay for some of the research effort in the universities, it will get no support at all, and industry will be the first to suffer."

There was a very real difference, she said, between delivering a product to suit the needs of the market and working out a programme of teaching and research to last for at least 20 years.

The real question was how industry was to prosper and how the education essential for that prosperity was to be enabled to survive and flourish.

Edited by Mark Jackson

## NEWS FOCUS

## Winter breaks that no one wants

## SPORTS INJURIES

Too many pupils return from skiing trips on crutches and part of the blame is being laid at their teachers' chalet door, Jane Last reports

Many of the 100,000-plus children who go skiing with their schools each year are supervised by teachers who are not qualified for such work.

And, perhaps unsurprisingly, 98 per cent of injuries to pupils are sustained not during ski school lessons but while they are "free skiing" with their teachers.

The English Ski Council has recently developed a Ski Course Organizer Scheme to help close the gap between the responsible teacher and the instructor, but it was fiercely criticized at a conference on the problems of safety in school skiing earlier this month, because it leads to no qualification.

"It is not worth the paper it is written on," said Mr Martin Styles, outdoor activities adviser for Kent, "unless it includes a formal appraisal of the teacher's abilities. It is merely an attendance certificate."

Whether teachers should be qualified to supervise skiing is a contentious issue. There is little support for the view that for most school children, even to do skiing for short school days, very few teachers have such a qualification.

Some PE advisers at the conference in Nottingham, which was organized by the English Ski Council and School

Plus Travel, believed that children should only ski with an instructor in formal lessons and have no "free skiing" time at all. Others encourage teachers to ski with the children and supervise practice sessions.

What looks so very beautiful is among the most hostile environments on earth," said Mr John Shadden, director of coaching to the English Ski Council. "You forget you are moving to the edges of outer space, and forget the protection necessary."

"The Ski Course Organizer Scheme raises the awareness of our responsibilities to secure the greater safety of our children, enabling them to enjoy and appreciate the full splendour of the mountains."

"But hundreds of teachers take thousands of children skiing and supervise them on the slopes. The teachers need qualifications to do that; they don't need certificates."

The SCO scheme is in two parts. The first aims to "enable teachers to organize schools' ski courses safely, responsibly, and efficiently". It includes seven hours of theory and six hours' practical tuition on a dry ski slope.

The second part consists of six days' practical tuition in a ski resort, with four theory sessions. But it does not lead to a qualification awarded by the English Ski Council.

Mr George Howard, PE adviser for Somerset, said: "In our county we state that unless teachers have a qualification they can take children to the slopes and bring them back, but cannot go skiing with them. All children have our hours' tuition at ski school. There is no 'free skiing'."

"We are dealing with a proficient teacher, approved by the head and the L.E.A., who does a week's course and



could be legitimately allowed to supervise children after lessons. But the ESC should give a qualification certificate as in other sports. Take canoeing - one does a course and gets a qualification."

The Scottish National Ski Council offers a Ski Leader Certificate, which is a teaching qualification aimed at staff who take children skiing at weekends. It is a tough, seven-day continuous assessment course organized by local authorities, often at minimal cost to the teacher, or by the national sports centres. It covers avalanche risks, navigation, ski accident procedures, ski techniques as well as basic teaching, and is only open to teachers who are good skiers.

Mr Stan Palmer, outdoor education adviser for Wolverhampton, was adamant that teachers should not be allowed to supervise skiing unless they had the Scottish qualification.

"Skiing is the most dangerous of all outdoor pursuits and potentially in the most hostile arena," said Mr Palmer. "Normally, conditions are very dangerous. There are 130 accidents per 10,000 skiers."

An outdoor pursuits teacher from Manchester accused i.e.s.s. such as Wolverhampton of ruining the pleasure of the mountains. "I don't want to package skiing in a little safe container," he said. "It takes all the adventure

out of the lives of children."

Mr Brian Calvert, Cambridgeshire outdoor education officer, pointed out that there were great advantages in experienced teachers leading their own youngsters skiing. "There is tremendous interchange between teacher and pupil."

Mr Dane Oliver, adviser for Hampshire, was concerned about the legal implications. "If i.e.s.s. are sued we have to prove our staff are competent. With legal aid, parents have nothing to lose and everything to gain by suing the local authority if their child is injured skiing. So it is even more important that we get our act together."

A teacher from New Zealand suggested a suitable guideline for local authorities deciding on whether teachers should supervise skiing. "Ask yourself what the corner would say - that's not a bad guideline for most people."

Scottish National Ski Council, 18 Ainslie Place, Edinburgh G3 7JF. English Ski Council, Area Library Building, The Precinct, Halesowen, West Midlands B61 5D1. Halesowen, West Midlands B61 5D1.

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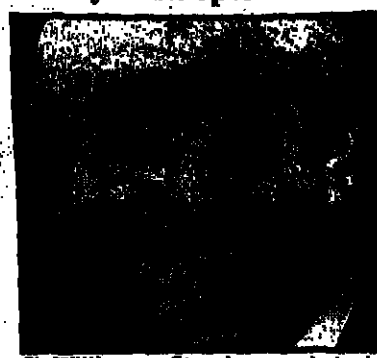
## Baker rejects MPs' appeal for more teachers and funds

by Diane Spencer

The Government has rejected the main recommendations of the Commons' Select Committee report on primary education. Mr Kenneth Baker, the Education Secretary, said last week that many of the report's concerns had already been addressed in the Education Reform Bill now before Parliament.

He resisted appeals for more teachers and funds for primary schools saying that expenditure had risen, in real terms, by 7 per cent between 1978-9 and 1986-7. He also promised to keep the current level of expenditure on under-five. His comments were contained in a written reply to the Committee's report, which was published 15 months ago.

"I believe that there is much in common between what the Government is seeking to achieve and the overall approach of the Committee towards primary education," Mr Baker



Sir William van Straubenzee, chaired Select Committee

er said. He pointed out that the Bill would deal with the Committee's concerns on the national curriculum, collective worship, financial delegation and admissions.

Mr Baker added that since the Bill

contained specific proposals on the report's recommendations he felt it more appropriate to respond in the form of a memorandum, instead of a command paper.

He rejected outright 11 of the report's recommendations including:

- a change in departmental responsibilities for play groups and day care for children;
- the idea that HMI should approve work schemes for each school;
- any change in the remit of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Training (which the report said should be allowed to lapse after current term of office and be replaced by the Council for National Academic Awards and other validating bodies).

Mr Baker said he had the full confidence in CATE and he had no plans to create a new body to coordinate in-service training at a national level.

## By no means clusters' last stand

by Iola Smith

Powys County Council's policy of grouping small rural primary schools together is proving cost-effective and popular with teachers.

As 58 per cent of the county's primaries employ three teachers or fewer, clusters of five to nine schools have been established. Each school maintains its autonomy within the cluster, having its own headteacher and governing body. But working as a group has lessened isolation, and opened up new opportunities for pupils and teachers, according to a £16,000 research project funded by the Welsh Office.

To establish the practical effectiveness of clusters, four (based on the districts of Bullh Wells, Crickhowell, Knighton and Gwent) were chosen for study. Powys County Council, Crickhowell, Knighton and Gwent were chosen for study.

Equipment purchasing was a task assigned to the Crickhowell and Knighton group. Both were given £2,000 and they chose to spend the money on science resources, musical instruments and art equipment which could be used by all schools in the cluster. The research report applauds their approach. "For although the acquisition of equipment was beneficial, the by-products of staff discussion and in-service training were equally valuable."

This exercise also suggested that clustering can be economically viable, because schools can share equipment and small school-based computer software packages. Bullh and Gwent assessed the

benefits of employing supply teachers on a cluster basis. The £2,000 was each granted enabled schools to release teachers to work in-service courses and for the urban schools in a neighbouring cluster. Gwent used the money to introduce specialist help in the communications professionals, have drama and computing taught by supply teachers in this way. "The curriculum of small schools is shared expertise and professional development."

The study also reports that copies of the report are available from Powys County Council, Llandudno, Spa Road, Llandudno, Gwent NP23 5LW.

## How to win friends and influence people

Some teaching unions are feeling the need for public relations advice. Francis Beckett finds out why

Trade unions have become image-conscious. Declining membership, declining industrial power, and eight years of a government which does not respect their views have forced a radical rethink of their collective attitude towards the communications industry.

The two TUC-affiliated teaching unions, the National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers need friends and influence badly. Both have lost members. Yet the NUT's appointment of a public relations consultancy and the NASUWT's use of opinion research are not what they seem.

Other trade unions are building up public relations from a low base. They are hiring their first professional public relations staff or they are retaining PR consultants (and, through inexperience, often falling into the hands of the least reputable practitioners). But the NUT has for years been admired, in education and in trade union circles, for the professionalism of its communications.

Today the department which built its reputation, the press and external relations department, is being trimmed under the leadership of the man who did more than anyone else to build it - general secretary Fred Jarvis. Its communications professionals have been asked to do more and education journalists are not getting the service they are used to.

Mr Jarvis is sensitive to any suggestion that hiring consultants is related to the decline of the department. All Philip Gould Associates have been asked to do is opinion research on aspects of the Education Bill. "We know Kenneth Baker is being selective in his use of opinion polls. We want to

know the truth," he says. The NUT is considering other consultancies on a long-term basis.

Industrial action and the decision to stop joint membership with the National Association of Head Teachers resulted in a 10.8 per cent membership drop between 1985 and 1986. Mr Jarvis refuses to panic, saying the decline is "bottoming out", but it seems an odd time to dismantle the publicity department and put its functions into other departments. And it seems too late to commission opinion research about a Bill already published.

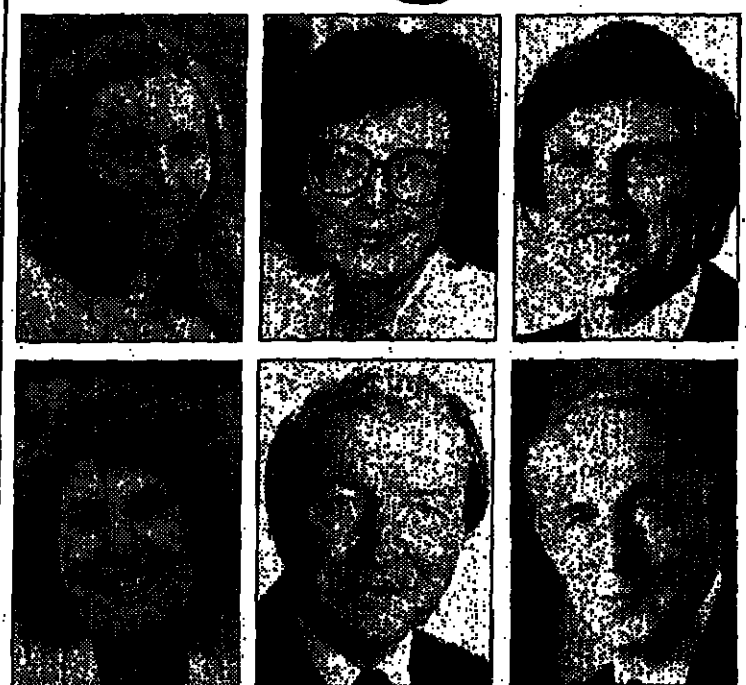
The NUT has not commissioned ordinary "quantitative" research, which tells you that X per cent of the population will vote Tory or can't tell margarine from butter. It wants in-depth "qualitative" work involving group discussions, which is sophisticated, labour-intensive and expensive. The union will not say how much it costs, but it may well run to five figures.

The NASUWT commissioned "qualitative" research from MORI earlier this year when it wanted to know what its members thought of the union. Not surprisingly in a profession with competing unions, its members seem to be satisfied. It might have been more helpful to know what non-members thought.

The NASUWT lost members over industrial action too - although not nearly so many. Like Fred Jarvis, deputy general secretary Nigel de Gruy refuses to panic. "The unions and the fairies ran for shelter in the Association of Masters and Mistresses and the Professional Association of Teachers," he says cheerfully. Neither does he feel inclined to make a special effort to get favourable media coverage. There are no plans to bring in communications professionals.

"Trade unions do not get a fair press. Most papers are only interested when we are doing things they do not like. We could improve our image by never taking industrial action, but in that case, our members' pay would be even worse than it is. Public relations people know the media, but they do not know the subject and they do not know the union," he says.

## THE TIMES Looking back



Who are these people - and how did they make the news in 1987? Find out next Thursday in The Times Review of the Year

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THE TIMES A lion among paper tigers (25p)



## BOOKS

# BOOKS OF THE YEAR

In a year that included an election, a summit, the Baker Bill, hurricanes, wars, disasters and media fascination with spies, royals and soaps, books have provided information, insights and sometimes escape. Here some well-known people describe their reading (and where relevant their children's) in 1987



**Glenys Kinnock**, Chair of One World, wife of the Leader of the Labour Party, teacher of reading to 6 and 7-year-olds  
Fay Weldon's *Letters to Alice* (Michael Joseph/Rainbird) is a wonderful book which I read in one go on a beach in Greece. It's as much a

to Jane Austen. *Close Company*, edited by Christine Parke and Carol Heath (Virago) is a collection of stories about mothers and daughters - a relationship which, as I can personally testify, has its ups and downs. This theme has fascinated women writers and these fine stories reflect all its complexities and joys. I found Barbara Castle's account of the relationship between Sylvia and Christabel Pankhurst (Penguin) fascinating. Admittedly - like Barbara Castle - my preference has always been for Sylvia, whose feminism was a clear expression of her socialism. My personal copy is especially cherished because of the inscription from the author.

Looking at books for children, I enjoyed *Chaplin's Not Chaps*, one of a marvellous series called "Next Door Books" published by Methuen. The books are illustrated with beautiful colour photographs and admirably match the needs of a multi-racial school. I would imagine that Janet and Allan Ahlberg's *The Jolly Postman* (Heinemann) has been universally admired in every primary school. The possibilities for using the letters and the story are endless. It is not surprising that 5,000 children nominated it as their favourite book.



**Terry Jones**, writer and ex-Monty Python  
*Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency* by Douglas Adams (Heinemann) is a fascinating journey through the apparently inexplicable; *J K Galbraith's A History of Economics Past and Present* (Penguin) is another fascinating journey through the apparently inexplicable. *The Riverside Chaucer* by Larry D Benson (Houghton Mifflin) is the best-ever edition of the Complete Works. The only snag is it's too heavy to read.

**Angela Rumbold**, Minister of State for Education  
My choices are *Oscar Wilde* by Richard Ellmann (Hamish Hamilton) - a superb biography; the fascinating love story of *August and RAB* by Molly Butler (Weidenfeld and Nicolson); *The*

**James Berry**, writer  
I'm busy reading "old" books. I never can catch up. You'll be appalled to hear I'm reading volume two of *War and Peace* and I'm enjoying it no end. Some time ago someone gave me a collection of D H Lawrence's essays, *A Selection from Phoenix*, edited by A H Inglis. He's so vital, so original. I love his creativity and his energy. You keep coming across aspects of his personality which are prejudiced or bigoted or small, but other aspects shine through. My third choice is Jonathan Raban's *Arctica* (Collins Harvill). He's a great intellectual and he's got such a fluent style. I like to see people writing about other cultures. But I see that he's going to fall in the trap of assuming a very Eurocentric superiority, a European prototype of everything. This is a culture which doesn't even have its own god. It borrows its gods, and goes on as if Jesus Christ was an Englishman.

**Caribbean Poetry Now** (Hodder and Stoughton) edited by Stewart Brown is one of the best poetry anthologies I've seen that chooses writers working in the Caribbean and here. It includes a range of language and styles and draws from various contemporary experiences. It's very rich.

For children, Angela Huth's *Island of the Children* (Orchard) is a particularly successful collection. On the whole it succeeds in selecting contemporary poetry that really relates to experience in our time. *Charlotte's Web* by E B White (Puffin) is another old book, which I came across only recently. Apart from bringing together a group of animals and their characteristics, it also reflects something of the human variety. It's very well structured and the content is really highlighted in a subtly dramatic way.

**Oliver Letwin**, former adviser to Mrs Thatcher and Conservative candidate for Hackney North  
I read John Colville's *Diaries* (Hodder), a rip-roaring yarn about life at the top. Eric Newby's *Traveller's Tales* (Pleasure), a charming collection of anecdotes that you can't put down, and *The Tamarisk Tree* (Virago). Dora Russell's autobiography. A poignant tale of what can go wrong.

Research by Sarah Jane Evans

**Edward Bilshen**, writer  
Richard Ellmann's *Oscar Wilde* (Hamish Hamilton) is a great biography that makes one delight afresh in that brave and attractive man and grieve afresh for his destruction. *Anthills of the Savannah* by Chinua Achebe (Heine-

mann) is a very good novel by any standard, from the most passionately sensible of African writers. The curious Czech gifts for marrying realism and folk tale are apparent in *Coat of Bohemia* by Zdenek Tomin (Hutchinson), a story of what it's like to be a dissident in Prague. It's somehow brilliant and invigorating and deeply sad at one and the same time.

**Wally Lamb**, author of *The Runaway* (Dent)  
and others, is simply one of the two or three most richly and thoughtfully and rumbustiously inventive of living writers for children. Rodney Papp's *The Mice and the Kettlefish Pirates* (Viking/Kestrel) is part of a series adored by a three-year-old grandson who, at the moment, when not Captain Haddock, is Pip Mouse, and thinks the villain of this series, D Rat, sometimes disguised as D Rathoven, air ace, the baddy at his absolute best.

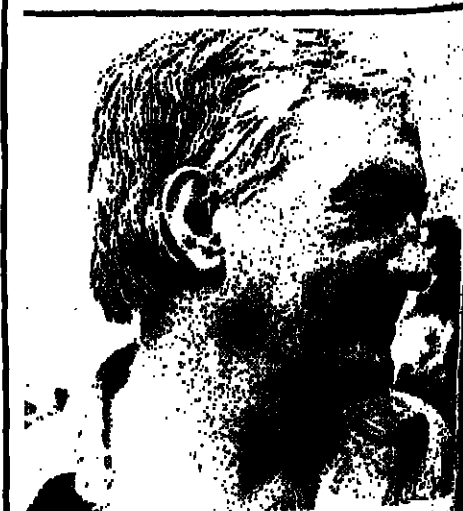
**Shirley Hughes**, writer and illustrator  
At least one of my books has to be about painting so I would choose *Turner and the Sublime* (British Museum), a stunning catalogue of seldom reproduced Turners with an accompanying text by Andrew Wilton which illuminates them against a background of the philosophy and literature of the time; scholarly yet highly readable. If possible I would like my Dickens novel, *Our Mutual Friend*, to be in the old Chapman and Hall edition with the spare, sombre, engraved illustrations by J Mahoney who for my money gets far closer to the black undertone of the story than the sometimes over-detailed interpretations by Phiz which so often accompany this author's work. From contemporary fiction I would choose *The Virgin in the Garden* by A S Byatt (Penguin); dense with imagery both lyrical and disturbing, dead accurate about feelings, clever and so well written that not a phrase can be missed.

For children, two widely different collections of verse. The first is Colin McNaughton's *There's An Awful Lot of Weirdos in Our Neighbourhood* (Walker Books), in which he matches the vitality of his draughtsmanship with some unpatriotic stuff, cunningly patched, just right to tickle a youngish school child's funny bones. The second book is a reprint of James Reeves' *Complete Poems for Children* (Heinemann), which can be read over and over again and lodged firmly in the imagination. The lovely line drawings by his old friend Edward Ardizzone are also memorable; the happiest possible combination of words and images.

**Fred Jarvis**, NUT General Secretary  
What with the battles over negotiating rights and now the monstrosities of Baker's Education Reform Bill, and reviewing Nuclear Energy for the TUC, it has not been a year of much pleasurable reading.

**Heather Couper**, Vice President and Past President of the British Astronomical Association, President of the Junior Astronomical Society  
In the southern hemisphere you see an entirely different sky - it's much more beautiful. Exploring the Southern Sky: A Pictorial Atlas from the European Southern Observatory by S Laustsen, C Madsen and R M West (Springer Verlag) is a beautiful coffee table book, whether you're an astronomer or not. It's a lovely gift for those who want to know what astronomers do - except for the price, £36, and £47 from January. Ann Saunders's *The Art and Architecture of London* (Phaidon) is a book that makes you want to go out and see London. I find it indispensable, though it's a bit heavy to take with you when you're rubbernecking. Very atmospheric. *Coniac*, a novel by Carl Sagan (Century) doesn't hold together entirely. It's basically the story of a female scientist who makes contact with extraterrestrial life. The first part does work - it charts a young girl's development, her fascination with the natural world, with geology, electronics and so on. There are a lot of parallels with her development and mine. It's not fashionable to be curious about things, but as Sir George Porter said in his recent address to the Royal Society, we have got to nurture curiosity-related studies in order to encourage further discoveries.

**Adrian Mitchell**, poet, playwright and writer for adults and children  
I enjoyed *The Hummings* by Tom Phillips (Thames and Hudson); it's a wonderful very good for dipping into. He's a poet who's taken a Victorian novel and painted each page, leaving a few words visible to make small poems. It's beautiful and very funny. I love mountains, but I got very hot hit by it when I was 33. David Cope's *Native Stones* (Secker and Warburg) is a book about climbing and a marvellous piece of imaginative writing. Three volumes of Mayukovsky's selected poems and stories in English from a Russian publisher (Penguin) is very good value at £5.95. I love Mayukovsky, and it's a pleasure to have all three volumes available.



**Naomi Mitchison**, writer  
*Behind the Wall*, by Colin Thubron (Heinemann) is a journey through China, which successfully conveys extremes of beauty, total squalor and how ordinary Chinese people are reacting now to thousands of years of art and violent change. Thomas Kenally's *The Playmaker* (Hodder and Stoughton) is a most successful game of turning small bits of historical evidence from Australia in the convict years into a story full of real people, contacts across cultures, colours and levels of education, held together briefly in a common purpose. I happened to have involved myself in writing a story set in the eighth century AD and was struggling to see where and how people lived when Rosamund McKitterick's *Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians* (Longman) came my way. All my problems were solved and I could see Europe beginning to turn into itself.

## BOOKS

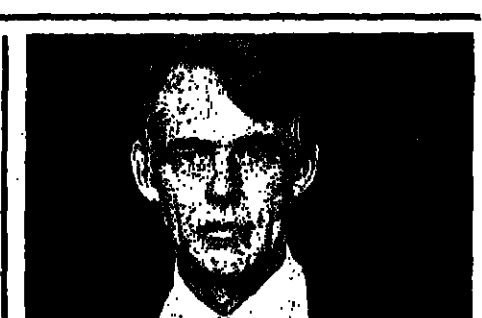


David Attenborough, broadcaster and naturalist

This might seem like cheating, but I read Anthony Powell's *Dance to the Music of Time* (Fontana) in an American edition of four volumes. I had to spend four weeks in America, taking an aeroplane journey every day, and this was an absolutely marvellous continuous read. The portraits are a perfection. *A History of the British Countryside* by Oliver Rackham (Dent) is a revelation about the ways in which human beings have modified the English countryside and about how much you can deduce by looking at such things as place names and map outlines. Australia has always fascinated me. I have been reading about the explorers of the landscape, and it's as exciting as anything Africa could produce. *A Feral Shore* by Robert Hughes (Collins) sets the exploration into its social context in a very vivid way. It's remarkable to think that this is what English people were doing only two hundred years ago.



**Eric Bolton**, Senior Chief HMI  
At the time I really thought that Robertson Davies's *What's Bred in the Bone* (Penguin) should have won the Booker. It's deceptively simple - a good story dealing with very deep issues. *The American Poetry* is a very intelligent, coherent collection. It has a super, lucid introductory essay by the editor (Helen Bendler). *More Die of Heartbreak* (Secker and Warburg) is a typical Bellow - pretty acerbic, no time for fashion or fools. It also has a serious critique, focusing on our preoccupations.



**Peter Smith**, joint general secretary of AMMA from January 1  
The history of the American Indian nations has always fascinated me, and *The Shoshonis*, by Virginia Cole Trenholm and Maurine Carley (University of Oklahoma Press), absorbingly documents another tragic chapter in their contact with the white men who in the name of God or profit or both destroyed their complex civilization. Alec Guinness's *Blessings in Disguise* (Hamish Hamilton/Fontana) is a gentle, witty autobiography by one of my favourite actors, which reveals him to be as elusive in the end as many of his finest performances. *Talking To Strange Men* by Ruth Rendell (Hutchinson) is a disturbing and compelling novel about the darker human compulsions, brilliantly constructed and impossible to put down.

**Anne Soler**, member of the SDP National Committee

*The Colour of Blood* by Brian Moore (Cape) is a political thriller which combines my favourite form of escape with my normal daily life. He's one of the best writers around. Barbara Vine's *A Fatal Inversion* (Viking) was a very good story with an evil atmosphere. A lot of writers try to create this sort of thing, but she brings it off. *Cities and the Wealth of Nations* by Jane Jacobs (Penguin) is a completely original explanation of what makes cities work. It's a subject which is obviously in one's mind at the moment.



**Dame Mary Warnock**, *Mistress of Girton College, Cambridge*  
Rather surprisingly, as I'm not an Anthony Burgess fan, I enjoyed his autobiography, *Little Wilson, Big God* (Hutchinson). It's brilliantly written and very funny. Richard Ellmann's *Oscar Wilde* (Hamish Hamilton) seems to me to be the ideal biography. I can't imagine it having been better done. *Gilbert Murray* by Duncan Wilson (OUP, January 1988) is a gentle, funny book, interesting for anyone, whether they are classicists or not. I read it in proof because my brother wrote it.

**Chris Powling**, author, broadcaster and lecturer  
My best read in 1987? No doubt about it - *Do Lord Remember Me* by Julius Lester (Dent). This miracle of resonance and compression describes the last day alive of an elderly preacher... and sums up a century and a half of black experience in America. It eclipsed even my annual re-reading of Raymond Chandler's *The Long Goodbye* (Penguin). Sometimes mistaken for a crime novel, this meditation on the maintenance of personal integrity in a corrupt and greedy society seemed more relevant than ever. I can't think why.

With my 11-year-old daughter, Ellie, I shared Anne Fine's *Madam Doubtfire* (Hamish Hamilton). A comedy about divorce of Ayckbourian blackness, which had us howling with laughter. We also took turns reading aloud the poems in Charles Causley's wonderful new collection *Jack The Treacle Eater* (Macmillan). Both books made a number of bedtimes the happiest part of the day.



**Jack Straw**, MP for Blackburn, Shadow Secretary of State for Education  
I picked out Anthony Howard's *RAB* (Cape) because I was education spokesman, but it turned out to be a very good read. *Gladstone* by Philip Magnus (John Murray) is a brilliant biography. One of the outstanding biographies written since the war. Magnus has an extraordinary feel for his subject. I also bought *Sailing School* by Doug Schriver (Macdonald) after I capsized twice in a dinghy! My son, who's seven, is working his way through *Swallows and Amazons* (Puffin). Arthur Ransome is certainly still proving very popular. My five-year-old daughter is enjoying *Peace at Last*, a story about a bear who can't get to sleep.



**Valerie Bragg**, Principal (from January 1) of the first City Technology College, Kingshurst  
I enjoyed *Vintage Thurber*, vol 2 (Penguin), because I find James Thurber witty and amusing - and I also find him useful for assemblies; Alan Robertson's *The Insider's Guide to Antique Furniture* (Unwin Hyman) because I collect antique furniture, and china and glass, and it's an absolute mine of information, and very well laid out; Yes, *Prime Minister* by Jonathan Lynn and Anthony Jay (eds) (BBC Publications) because it's just so funny. It's also fascinating, and one imagines it's very true to life.



**Paddy Ashdown**, MP for Yeovil, and Liberal Party Spokesman on Education and Science  
Books of the year? I nominate Peter Wright's *Spycatcher* (Heinemann or US Viking edition) because I wondered what all the fuss was about and I'm still wondering; Robert Louis Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey* (Chatto and Windus), because a dear friend told me it was disgraceful I hadn't read it and that it is a wonderful read. He was right and I'm rechristening my Renault 5 Modestine: *The 2024 Report* by Norman Macrae (Sidgwick and Jackson), because it is a seminal book which outlines ideas, many of which will be on the political agenda into the next century. Some of them are already coming true. Read the chapter on Russia.

**Nell Fletcher**, Leader of ILEA  
My first choice has to be two books by Ken Livingstone - I found it impossible to choose between them. The first is *If Voting Changed Anything They'd Abolish It* (Collins) and the second, *Moulding by Political Opinion* (Croom Helm), written with Robert Waller and Sir Geoffrey Finsberg. These are obligatory reading for any politician, with some of the most radical, refreshing and original thinking on the British political scene at the moment. My second choice is a major part in re-shaping the Labour Party.

*Always a Woman* by Beatrix Campbrell. I think she's a compelling and original writer and I think she's got on a superb way of analysing the Conservative Party in *The Iron Ladies: Why Women Vote Tory* (Virago). As somebody who has lived and taught in Leeds, I find Tony Harrison's *V* (Bloodaxe) very evocative. His imagery is powerful: it's the best poem I've read for a long time.

**Robert Leeson**, writer and critic  
Almost every good idea anyone has ever had for a story is somewhere in *Irish Folk Tales*, edited by Henry Glassie (Penguin). And even they got the ideas from someone else. It was intriguing to get to know Richard Crompton, the woman who invented one of the most memorable boy characters ever, in Mary Cadogan's biography (Unwin), and Monika Maron's *Flight of Ashes* (Readers International) is a novel which tells more of pre-Glasnost Eastern Europe than a row of reports.

**Charles Causley**, poet  
*Christ Stopped at Eboli* by Carlo Levi (King Penguin) and *If This Is a Man* by Primo Levi (Abacus) are two compelling and quietly written masterpieces of this or any other age: the first an account of political exile in Mussolini's pre-war Italy, the second of life and survival in Auschwitz. John Mole's *Boa to a Goats* (Peterloo Poets) is that rarity, an accomplished and wonderfully varied collection of poems for children that works equally well for adults. Not to be missed.

**Susan Hill**, novelist and critic  
I enjoyed Edwin Mickleburgh's *Beyond the Frozen Sea* (Bodley Head), a beautiful and passionate defence of Antarctica, with breathtaking photographs. *The Haw Lantern* by Seamus Heaney (Faber) a profound and moving new collection by our greatest living poet and Laurie Colwin's *Another Marvellous Thing* (Hamish Hamilton), a tender and funny American novel superior to many more showy offerings this year.

For children, newly commissioned poetry in Angela Huth's *Island of the Children* (Orchard) replaces the same old stuff of most anthologies. Nursery rhymes are brilliantly illustrated by the pop-up genius Robert Crowther in *Pop Goes the Weasel* (Walker), while the Whitbread prizewinner *A Little Lower Than the Angels* by Geraldine McEwan is a masterpiece of historical evocation for older readers.



## OVERSEAS

# Trouble brews in Hell's Kitchen

## UNITED STATES

Violence at one New York school is putting pupils in fear of their lives. Bill Norris reports

The knives are out in Park West High School. And not only knives, machetes, meat cleavers, brass knuckles and loaded revolvers are among the playthings of the student body.

Park West, a forbidding concrete edifice that looks more like a prison than a school, stands in one of the less salubrious parts of Manhattan. The district is known, and not without reason, as "Hell's Kitchen".

The problems of Park West High came to light last week when several hundred students staged a sit-in, refusing to attend classes until the school authorities took action to protect their lives. The incident coincided with a US Education Department survey, revealing that 27 per cent of American teachers are being hampered by "disruptive behaviour" in the classroom, and 17 per cent are thinking of leaving the profession as a result.

But "disruptive behaviour" clearly means different things to different people. The teachers who work at Park West were complaining of whispering in class, talking back, absenteeism and the throwing of "objects".

They should try teaching at Park West High. There, in the past few days, one student has sliced another with a machete, a second has held a loaded gun to a boy's head, and a third was found with three knives, a meat cleaver, and brass knuckles in his



Dressed for battle: New York's violence has moved from the streets into the classroom

satchel. There are 10 permanent security officers stationed at the school, but squads of reinforcements have to be sent almost every day.

"In 18 years in public education, I've never seen anything like this on a daily basis," said Nancy Casey, who works as a guidance counsellor at Park West. "Girls get robbed, kids get knifed out of school, and bring out their knives in school."

Ms Casey was chosen as "Guidance counsellor of the year" in 1986 by the New York Board of Education. She regards it as a battle honour. Many parents, she says, encourage their children to arm themselves before

going to school because they feel the authorities cannot protect them. There are 3,000 pupils at Park West High, though fewer than 2,500 usually attend. Apart from about 300 Dominicans, they are equally divided between blacks and Puerto Ricans—the white population deserted the place long ago—creating what one teacher facetiously calls "a certain amount of racial misunderstandings". Of the 196 teachers, only 26 are from minority races.

The man in charge of this explosive melange is Edward Morris, aged 60, who has been principal of Park West High since it opened in 1978. Mr Morris seems unconcerned, claiming

that the school is safe and that the level of violence is nothing new.

"We're dealing with all the malaise of society and 3,000 individuals," said Mr Morris in an interview with *The New York Times*.

The school is a microcosm of society. Kids have been bringing weapons to school for years. It's almost a habit to carry weapons. This is not unique to Park West.

As principal, Mr Morris enjoys lifetime tenure under the rules of New York State. Many of the teachers under him have no such job security. They are critical of his leadership, but

## Union's tax benefits threatened

The National Education Association, America's largest teachers' union, is facing an unwelcome challenge. It is bid by a conservative education organization succeeds, it could lose its cherished tax-exempt status, and more than \$1.4 million a year (£750,000) on property taxes in Washington DC.

The NEA is unique among American unions in enjoying tax exemption. The situation came about because, when it was founded in 1916, it was chartered by Congress as a neutral education organization. Through the Internal Revenue Service and the Labor Department reclassified it as a labour union in 1978, the charter stayed in effect and the tax benefits remained.

Now the National Council for Better Education, in alliance with Republican Congressman Richard Armey, is seeking revocation of the charter on the grounds that the NEA is really a political organization. In a presidential election year, in which the teachers union is expected to play an influential part in the choice of Democratic candidate, the charge may be hard to withstand.

An old adversary of the union, the NEA was promoting curricula "blatantly biased in favour of the Soviet Union". In its last crusade it is claiming to be supported by Albert Shanker, president of the rival American Federation of Teachers.

But the AFT, even though it may feel aggrieved about having to pay taxes while the NEA does not, is not prepared to go so far. "We are not doing anything," said a spokesman. "There may be little love between the two teachers' unions, but the tax collector is clearly beyond the pale."

## At the foothills of power

## INDIA

Doon's old boys include Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Hilary Tagg reports on the public school based on Eton, but with an essentially Indian character

In India, no less than England, public schools and playing fields go together like politicians and power, the one very often producing the other.

A tortuous six-hour bus journey north of Delhi brings you to Dehra Dun and the foothills of the Himalayas. Beneath them lies the Doon School, a haven of peace and mown lawns reminiscent of an English village.

The school's classrooms are packed with politicians' sons, maharajas' strip-ped offspring but not their wealth and the offspring of those who populate the corridors of power in India today.

Rajiv Gandhi, currently the school's best-known old boy, followed the family tradition by studying there and, despite his present unpopularity, a Doon schoolboy can still enjoy preferential treatment in almost any place he chooses.

Despite its prestigious predecessors, the Doon School is one of the least expensive public schools in India, charging fees of Rs10,000 (£470) a year.

majority of the workforce earns less than Rs1,500 (£70), a month, even these modest fees are out of most people's reach.

That is why some 20 per cent of the school's 600 pupils are there courtesy of the Government—scholars on grants, indistinguishable from the rest of the boys because of the strict rules governing dress and extras, such as watches, electronic toys and gadgets. It is not uncommon for a prefect to confiscate anything which contravenes these rigid laws.

A sense of community responsibility is encouraged, best illustrated by a squad of boys who regularly visit a

handicapped. The school has also "adopted" nearby Tunwala, a typically poor North Indian village whose inhabitants are helped financially and practically by the school and its pupils.

In October this year, students were asked for additional sacrifices to help drought victims following the failure of this year's monsoon rains. Alternatives were, however, hastily put forward in a desperate attempt to avoid the proposal to give up the midday meal. In common with all schoolboys, food to the Doon pupil is the most important feature of the day.

Originally a forestry research institute, the school was founded in 1935 and lies in grounds covered with trees, shrubs and flowers. It has an air of graceful shabbiness and, to the outsider at least, a vaguely haphazard approach to teaching. An old boy on a visit will soon find himself behind the lectern in a role reversal which seems to be taken for granted.

Visitors from Britain also regularly appear in the staff room—often taking a year off between school and university with no qualifications other than a

World. Like schools of its kind worldwide, sport plays a key part in every boy's life. Apart from football, athletics and cricket, mountaineering is a popular activity. In 1960, old boy Gurdeep Singh became the first man to scale Everest's South Col. Another former pupil, Saman Dubey, at 19, became the youngest man ever to climb Everest, before going on to become editor of the *Indian Express*, the country's biggest circulation English daily.

The school, which takes pupils from the age of eight, also has an impressive academic record. Many students win scholarships to study for degrees in their own country as well as the prestigious universities abroad.

In spite of its similarities to Eton, the home of the Doon's founding fathers, the school retains a character which is essentially Indian. All lessons are taught in English, but assembly songs and prayers are in Hindi. The school is

heavy emphasis on the ethnic culture which ensures that the British influence is secondary. However loud its critics cry "elitism", the school looks to set to thrive and continue to produce some of the most powerful men in the world's modern democracy. It is all the more surprising to learn, therefore, that most of the teachers pay little or no tax because their salaries are so low, and that, although they have houses which go with the job, few have the security of their own property to provide them comfort in retirement.

Such paradoxes may seem incomprehensible, but they are part of everyday life in India. It is interesting to note, however, that many members of staff are themselves old boys.

Loyalty is perhaps the greatest lesson any boy learns during the formative years he spends at the school. Loyalty and the determination to be the best in whichever career he chooses to enter after graduating from

Branching out: Doon pupils often visit the local Cheshire home for the mentally handicapped (right)



## Calculated to promote computers

It may be the most valuable school prize ever offered: a supercomputer, capable of 375 million calculations per second. Over the next few months, every high school in America is to be given the chance to compete for it. The contest, organized by the National Science Foundation, is a test of computing skills. The winning school, from four finalists who will meet in a play-off next summer, will have free use of the supercomputer for two years. With only 300 such machines in operation worldwide, its students will join a very select group of scientists, mathematicians and engineers.

But will they know what to do with it when they get it? Can they better President John A. Systems Incorporated, manufacturer and distributor of the supercomputer, is sure that, with training, they will.

He believes that young people need to be exposed to supercomputers in order to develop skills for the coming computer generation.

"We can help to energize educators, parents and children, and perhaps recreate the technological fervour that the Sputnik launch caused," Mr Ledbetter said.

Though the supercomputer on offer

is not state-of-the-art—latest models can compute up to 10 billion calculations per second—it is still far in advance of anything now in the classroom.

The gift marks the latest move in a marketing war among supercomputer manufacturers anxious to get their products established in universities and offering generous discounts. It seems that Mr Ledbetter, mindful of the fact the Apple Computers gained their present dominance by giving away machines to schools in the early years, may have his eye on the future in more ways than one.

Critics contend that the problems of Park West High, and similar schools in New York City, will not be solved until tenure for principals is abolished and new blood can be introduced. But the issue is politically sensitive, and an education "summit meeting" called by New York's Governor Cuomo last week, pushed it aside.

Meanwhile, the robberies and assaults continue. The only new blood at Park West High is likely to be on the floor.

## Aids transfer

The Canary Islands regional education authority has finally bowed to parental pressure and transferred Rafael Rodríguez, an elementary school teacher, to an Aids centre in Las Palmas (TES, October 23). Rafael Rodríguez is now working as an administrator in the education authority's architects' department.



Road show: students protest about the lack of staff, housing and books

Socialist Government to allocate 15 per cent of next year's budget on education, a demand that goes back to the 1980s but has never been met.

Although the Socialists have pledged to set aside an extra £43 million for education in 1988, spending will be run at less than 10 per cent of total government outlay.

"We had great problems just keeping up school buildings and paying the year's bills at the beginning of the school year in September," said Dionisio Ballarín, vice-president of the Federation of State School teachers.

"In the past, 15 per cent had always been a symbolic figure, now it's an absolute necessity," he added.

Helena Smith

## Protest march follows undergraduate murder

## CHINA

The murder of a 19-year-old undergraduate has provoked student protests about lax campus security and led to violent clashes with the police.

More than 1,000 students from Beijing University of International Economics marched through the capital last week following the death of Zong Wei, who was attacked by hoodlums on the campus.

Violence erupted when the students, carrying white funeral wreaths, broke through police barricades on their march to the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade, the

department responsible for running the university.

Students held "unresponsive and uncaring" university authorities responsible for Zang Wei's death following their failure to provide adequate security after similar incidents in the past. But even worse, said students, was the behaviour of university doctors who refused to treat Zang Wei, after he had been stabbed, saying they were not responsible for student deaths. He died in hospital the following morning.

Students also alleged that campus authorities "evaded responsibility and covered up" the death of 19-year-old Zheng Xueji, who died of pneumonia in September after months of "negligence and poor medical care".

University leaders "don't appear to really care about students' welfare, and refuse to take responsibility for the appalling lack of management and student care in the university," said the protesters.

The march was the first major student action since last winter's nationwide "demonstrations," which forced Hu Yaobang, the Party general secretary, to resign.

Students said they appreciated the seriousness of their actions and the Government's handling on such demonstrations, but insisted that current protests were "non-political".

Geoffrey Parkins

## Angry students lay siege to Minister

## GREECE

Almost three months of continuous protest by Greek students climaxed shortly before the Christmas recess when demonstrators burst into the inner sanctum of the Education Ministry.

Denouncing chronic shortages of staff, student housing, textbooks and lecture halls, the student leaders laid siege to the Education Minister for more than eight hours.

While rock music rumbled from loudspeakers in the street outside, the invaders blocked the building's exits, scuffled with security guards and confined Education Minister Antonis Triflis to his seventh-floor office.

The Minister's captivity came amid a flurry of student protest marches and on-going occupations of university and technical college buildings around the country. Luxury hotels and local government offices have also been taken over in a push call for increased spending on education.

The tragicomic scene which saw Mr Triflis taking photographs of the students and recording the events on tape, capped a winter term marked by aggressive student demonstrations and clashes with club-wielding riot police.

Scores of students have been injured in the skirmishes and at least three have

been admitted to hospital since the academic year began in September.

Fuelled by growing discontent among the nation's 100,000 school teachers, student unrest has become the focal point of heated debate among parliamentarians, academics and guests on television chat shows.

Ever since the polytechnic uprising against the Colonels' Regime in November 1973, which ended in the death of some 34 students and paved the way for the collapse of the seven-year dictatorship, Greeks have taken student unrest very seriously.

With less than a week to go before the end of term, both students and teachers, chanting the same slogans their heroes shouted 14 years ago, are clearly becoming very impatient.

As a protest against the "hunger wages", lack of school buildings, teacher training colleges and minimal facilities, schoolteachers have staged strikes and joined protesting students in mass rallies.

The average teacher, now asking for a pay increase of about 30 per cent, takes home approximately £278 a month with few fringe benefits.

The teachers, who also complain of out-dated textbooks, claim that around 9,500 extra classrooms are needed to accommodate schoolchildren.

Both teachers and students want Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu's

## Broad-based studies could benefit sixth form

Sir—The chairman of the National Advisory Body in his address to the Royal Society of Arts said of sixth-form reorganization: "We should both expect and hope for a framework for broad-based studies more like the broad-based International Baccalaureate or the Scottish Highers".

The annual conference of the Girls' Schools Association in Edinburgh recently considered these alternatives. As far as the baccalaureate was concerned, though the framework seemed to be the problems and costs of staffing, and a movement of opinion against two-tier patterns such as the inclusion of AS levels.

If one gets down to time-tabling, the difference between the three patterns does not seem great. Consider the following figures for taught contact periods, which allows considerably less for general studies than the largely imaginary one quarter to one third of the sixth-former's time:

3 A levels at 8 periods + 6 general studies  
3 IB Highers at 6 periods and 3 subsidiarys at 3 periods and 2 periods of theory of knowledge  
5 new style A levels (like Scottish Highers) at 5 periods + 6 general studies

One of the time-tabling advantages of the IB's more European-style six subject pattern has always seemed to me to be that it gives the head the chance to offer to a wider group of teachers some sixth-form work. Probably such a pattern would cost a little more in staffing ratios, but if any reform which involves spending more

money is to be ruled out we might as well all go home.

The movement away from two-tier patterns is probably a more serious issue, and certainly needs clarification. It would help if we replaced the phrase two tier and two level. That all subjects in a sixth-form curriculum need not be studied at the same level is a truism in the European systems which we are now often urged to copy; but that does not imply two tiers with the less intensely studied examined at the end of the first year. That was a weakness in the old Higher Certificate and the Scottish system as it has been recently developed, but a weakness that can be remedied by a simple regulation.

The main weakness in a five-subject pattern all at the same level approximately to A level is surely that it would do little or nothing to encourage more students to continue with mathematics, or to make easier the integration of less academic courses into program-

mes which are academically acceptable to universities. There is surely a sound educational argument to providing in the broad-based sixth, courses which are preparatory to university study as well as courses which are terminal. The best syllabuses for the two are not likely to be the same.

All this is doubtless being thrashed out in the Higginson Committee, but at Edinburgh there was not time enough to discuss it in the detail it needs.

ALEC PETERSON  
International Baccalaureate Office  
London  
18 Woburn Square  
London WC1H 0NS

## Steiner standard

Sir—The headline of your article of October 9 ("Low standards of Steiner school worry inspectors") is incorrect: "Steiner schools" are mainstream. There is only one Association of Steiner schools in this country: that registered at the address below.

Research shows that the October 1985 report, quoted in the article, distinctly refers to Drayton Manor as "a home-school for children needing care and attention".

The headed notepaper of the establishment exactly concurs with this description.

Parents of pupils at Steiner schools are most concerned by the implications of the headline and have contacted this registered office as a result.

Moreover, none of the association's members has "low standards". On the contrary, statistics, particularly of those Steiner schools offering full provision from pre-school to university entrance, amply bear this out.

BRIEN MASTERS  
Co-Chairman  
Steiner Schools Fellowship  
The Association of Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf) Schools in Great Britain  
Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row  
Sussex

## Price support

Sir—In his recent article on the work of the Select Committee on Education, (TES, November 13) my friend and former colleague, Sir William van Straubenzee, makes a number of pertinent points. I particularly agree with his strong criticism of the fact that Parliament has no proper opportunity to debate the reports of select committees, something which could be put right if we set aside a number of days a year for this purpose—and curbed Government's legislative extravagance in the process.

However, what prompts this letter is his forthright, and entirely and uncharacteristically unfair criticism of the work of the Select Committee during the 1979 Parliament. He alleges that the chairman, Christopher Price, behaved in a partisan manner and that the Committee frequently divided on party lines. More important, he alleges that it concerned itself with short-term issues.

This is a grossly distorted account of the work of one of the most stimulating committees I have ever served on, and one of the fairest and most able chairmen with whom I have ever worked. Of course, there were occasions when we did differ, though not always on party lines, but I think the

consensus of Committee watchers was that we produced some of the best reports of the 1979 Parliament.

It is true that we did look at crisis issues. Most people who attended our sessions on *The Poms* and on the take-over of *The Times* Supplements seemed to think that we achieved something, in the case of the session on *The Poms* we worked out a formula which helped save the series and in the case of the Supplements we obtained assurances from Mr Rupert Murdoch which were, to put it mildly, of some importance.

However, I believe our most enduring work was in the detailed reports that we published. I take particular pride in that on the funding of the arts. It was the most comprehensive review of the subject ever presented to Parliament, and it was unanimous. There is one other point which modesty should not prevent me mentioning. Our allegedly high-profile and partisan chairman happily took a back seat and suggested that I chair virtually all the sessions during the inquiry.

It is a pity that Sir William, in seeking to explain the excellence of his own Committee, should feel it necessary to denigrate the style and the achievements of its predecessor.

PATRICK CORMACK MP  
House of Commons, London SW1A

write the article?). He should also realize the importance of that information being accurate. Misleading information could lead to one school's intake being seriously affected.

J KENNERLEY  
Headmaster  
Horrage Rossett High School  
Green Lane  
Horrage

Our reporter, Jeremy Sutcliffe, spoke to a number of heads in the York and Stipion area, whose schools had been mentioned locally as considering opting out, and they were all able to assure him that they had no plans whatever to opt out. Mr Kennerley did not take the opportunity to deny the story, either when first interviewed or during a second telephone call, after he had spoken to his chair of governors. Editor

He admitted that his article was based on rumour and led me to believe that the school would not be named in the article.

Mr Sutcliffe must realize the sensitivity of the opting-out issue (why else

## Travel

## Amsterdam Map

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## LETTERS

# School libraries could suffer in takeover of ILEA

Sir - I must take issue with the last section of Rodney Brooke's article (TES, December 11) which looks forward to integrating Westminster's Inner London Education Authority schools with the rest of its borough's services, where he speaks so idealistically of the potential co-operation between school libraries and the public library service.

It is good that he has taken notice of school libraries, and not surprising that he is eager to take over some professionally-organized school library resource centres on which many thousands of pounds have been spent by the ILEA. But anyone who knows anything about English school libraries will know that well-resourced centres supervised by full-time qualified staff are in the minority. Though every local authority apart from the ILEA runs both public libraries and education, only a few are committed to staffing secondary school libraries with professionals and clerical assistants, for example Harrow (in the minority among outer London boroughs), Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Nottinghamshire, Suffolk and Surrey.

Therefore Mr Brooke's assumption that joint authority means a better library service for schoolchildren is not warranted by precedent. However, one is glad to see evidence of good intentions, and that he does not intend to sack the school librarians if West-

minster takes over.

Mr Brooke writes that "school libraries can never match the resources of a large public library", but you only get what you put in. The larger the school library, or the more books on termly loan from central services (an integral part of the ILEA's policy, with project loans for classrooms and an education library for teachers' academic needs), the more library staff are needed to order, process, shelve, issue, retrieve and reshelve the books. With a bookstock of 20,000 books and non-book materials for a medium-size comprehensive of 1,300 pupils, the full-time librarian (myself) and a 20-hour-a-week clerical assistant were busily employed in supervising a speedy turnover of books. We could also do something which is not asked of the public library: pinpoint a requested book, send a note to the borrower and have it returned in a few days. The school library has to answer to educational needs in a way the public library does not.

Yet Mr Brooke writes: "Schools could be assured of improved access to a wider range of books and related materials" - which does assume a well-funded and staffed public library service tool in the ILEA we were sufficiently well-funded, with several thousand pounds a year, to find nearly all our needs on site. We also encouraged pupils to join their local public



Book work: combining school and public libraries may not improve the service

library, and from experience I can say that it is better for pupils (and teachers) to borrow on their own tickets than for their school librarians to be responsible for chasing up overdue public library books.

If Mr Brooke presents an ideal collaboration, operating in only a few local authorities, the norm is quite different. Jobs are advertised as "teacher-librarian" posts, with no qualification or experience in librarianship required, and no in-service training for the certificate in school librarianship. The teacher is expected to run the library in a few free periods; library lessons are supervised by a succession of teachers; the anchor person is a part-time clerical assistant, and when she goes home the library is shut.

No wonder that the bookstock is small and the turnover low. You can only do exciting, progressive things to promote independent learning when there is a professional librarian to co-operate with the teachers and train her clerical assistants. As for co-operation with the public library - our service only employs three children's specialists, compared to some inner London boroughs which employ one per branch.

There are some half-way houses in school librarianship: authorities which give the teacher-librarian a good prop-

ortion of time-tabled periods in the library and run training schemes for the certificate. But there is no reciprocal qualification for chartered librarians who want to specialize in schools; if they do a Postgraduate Certificate in Education followed by a probationary year's teaching, they are then vulnerable to being called away as cover and treated as a glorified supply teacher. They would be forced to perform what they considered unprofessional duties - classroom teaching outside their subject specialism, leaving their library closed or unsupervised.

If Mr Brooke succeeds in his takeover bid, he will need to continue employing a full-time librarian, media resources officer, technician and clerical help in order to maintain standards, as well as keep up the book-fund. This is interesting, as the option of boroughs argue that they can run education more economically. Kenneth Baker has complained that the ILEA had twice as many non-teaching staff as the average local education authority in secondary schools - some of them are librarians and MROs. Library resource centres staffed full-time are incidentally part of the American education service which Kenneth Baker so much admires.

JESSICA YATES  
ILEA Librarian, 1973-81  
14 Norfolk Avenue, London N15

## Continuing work

Sir - I read with some interest and not a little surprise the article on the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education study conference (TES, December 4).

The article does not accurately reflect the Manpower Services Commission's current actions or future intentions on training for adults in functional literacy and numeracy skills. There is no new money for work on literacy and numeracy this or next year. What we are doing is seeing what more can be achieved from within existing resources for programmes and related developments.

We already work in partnership with local education authorities, colleges, private providers and voluntary organizations and with our respective contributions in money, time and expertise, reach more people in better ways than any of us could do alone. While in working with others in the field, we want to move swiftly to increase our emphasis on this type of training, the MSC is not seeking "immediate solutions" or "quick fixes". The size of the problem and the way in which it is tackled will call for substantial efforts over a considerable time.

We are building on the opportunities already offered and exploring with local authorities, educationists, voluntary bodies and other organizations what more should be done particularly in the areas of assessment, materials, delivery and networking of provision. The MSC chairman has recently put to the Secretary of State for Employment a strategy endorsed by the Commission to take the initiative forward over the next year.

We are looking to continue to work with I.C.A.S. It is unfortunate that the conference speech you reported gives an incorrect and opposite impression.

S C NEWTON  
Head of adult training programmes  
Manpower Services Commission  
Moorfoot, Sheffield

## Tears to my ears...

Try your hand at the education quiz (right) while Nigel Richardson unearths some less celebrated utterances from staffroom and classroom (below)

Old quotes never die - they get resurrected for Christmas quizzes (see right) before gaining more permanent recognition in books compiled by Nigel Rees. Teachers' *bons mots* rarely get a look in, however, alongside the outpourings of politicians, sportsmen or stars of stage and screen. But a set of old school magazines I came across recently redresses the balance somewhat.

For 10 years, successive sixth-formers lovingly recorded the gems of wisdom of those who taught them. Anyone trying to prove that teachers are intellectually dynamic and highly lucid will need to know that:

"Most people die in the end";

"When went blind because he lost his sight";

"You get men in primary schools, but the vast majority of them are women"; and

"I've never met a child who was not a genius."



## Who said?

- "People from my sort of background need good schools to compete with children from privileged homes like Shirley Williams and Antony Wedgwood Benn."  
a Neil Kinnock  
b Margaret Thatcher  
c Edward Heath
- "One of the first conditions of learning in a woman is to keep the fact a profound secret."  
a Dora Russell  
b Lord Byron  
c Honore de Balzac
- "Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught."  
a Oscar Wilde  
b George Bernard Shaw  
c A S Neill
- "I originally wanted to be a teacher. It was the only thing I had the qualifications to be."  
a Cynthia Payne  
b Paul McCartney  
c Fred McEvoy
- "Education is a weapon, whose efforts depend on who holds it in his hands and at whom it is aimed."  
a Kenneth Kaunda  
b Joseph Stalin  
c Paulo Freire
- "In my days schoolmistresses wouldn't stand for any nonsense unless there was no room to do it any other way."  
a Groucho Marx  
b Ted Wragg  
c Max Miller
- "Whatever women do they must do at least twice as well as men to thought half as good. Luckily this is not difficult."  
a Germaine Greer  
b Glenda Jackson  
c Charlotte Whitton
- "I would close down your school where most of the children are not reading by the age of seven."  
a Edwina Currie  
b Rhodes Boyson
- "Education is what survives when what has been learnt has been forgotten."  
a Christian Schiller  
b B F Skinner  
c John Dewey
- "False ideas and poor knowledge can be set aside by correction."  
a B F Skinner  
b Roger Scruton  
c Adolf Hitler
- "University politics are vicious precisely because the stakes are so small."  
a Lord Annan  
b Henry Kissinger  
c Richard Hoggart
- "I am always ready to learn but I do not always like being taught."  
a Winston Churchill  
b Spike Milligan  
c Rudyard Kipling
- "The thing I hate about socialism is that they regard everyone as having the right to education."  
a Keith Joseph  
b Jeffrey Archer  
c Enoch Powell
- "The young people of today love luxury, have bad manners, they scoff at authority and lack respect for their elders."  
a Edward Thring  
b Socrates  
c Norman Tebbit
- "To teach is one of the most honourable callings known to human beings. It lays upon those who take it the heaviest and most precious of obligations."  
a Plato  
b Matthew Arnold  
c Shirley Williams

Compiled by Dave Watts

- |    |                   |
|----|-------------------|
| 7  | Charlotte Whitton |
| 15 | Shirley Williams  |
| 14 | Socrates          |
| 13 | Jeffrey Archer    |
| 12 | Winston Churchill |
| 11 | Henry Kissinger   |
| 10 | Adolf Hitler      |
| 9  | B F Skinner       |
| 8  | Rhodes Boyson     |

Sir - Local authorities may face the consequences of teacher shortages by following the example of their London counterparts, and recruiting teachers from overseas. We are two qualified teachers from the Republic of Ireland who have been employed in England and would like to bring the problems we have encountered to the attention of all local authorities and potential employers.

Teachers who are not qualified to teach in the UK must submit full details of their teacher training to the Department of Education and Sciences for their assessment. Each application must receive individual attention irrespective of whether or not dozens of people with the same qualification have been assessed and subsequently awarded "qualified teacher status". This, the DES insists, is in the interest of the applicant.

Eighteen months after making an initial application, one of us is still awaiting recognition and paying dearly the price of "individual treatment". Without qualified status, a "teacher" can only be employed as an instructor. Although the school requires them to work the same number of hours as their qualified colleagues, they work for different rates of pay.

In spite of the recent Burnham ruling which allows authorities to give back-payments for the differences in salary between the time of employment and the actual date of recognition, the local authority has told us there is no guarantee of this.

It is difficult to comprehend why the DES takes so long to assess individual cases. The number of teaching practice hours is one of the principal criteria in being deemed worthy of qualified teacher status.

As the school year rolls on, the number of hours we spend actually "instructing" in the UK increases, while neither of us may have completed enough teaching practice hours in schools hundreds of miles from here, some years ago. Surely this is worthy of review by Mr Baker?

As he is doing little to attract "qualified" teachers to the profession, he might see fit to do something for those from overseas who complement his payroll?

Sir - I welcome David Dale's warm support of Child Abuse: The Educational Perspective (TES, November 12) and, like him, I believe that it is an important task of addressing the problem of child abuse in schools.

It must challenge the position on the part that teachers have in the long-term prevention of child abuse. It is a role which should be transformed to take on a directly preventive role.

What we are saying is that some quite subtle shifts in style and emphasis might have a significant impact on levels of abuse in future generations.

Social workers, like David Dale, and indeed teachers, are used to dealing with the crisis situation when abuse is alleged or detected. It is perhaps understandable that we become obsessed with this reactive role.

However, if we are to break into the cycle of abuse we have to change the thinking, the attitudes and the skills of

those sitting in our classrooms today and it is they that we must affect if we are to achieve any long-term reduction in abuse.

It is after reading the chapter by Steven Vizard on the "Historical and cultural context of abuse" that David Dale still sees this epidemic of violence towards children as an individual problem, rather than he assesses the point.

I found it ironic that in the same edition of your journal, the editorial "Comment" reported on Professor Bruno Bettelheim's work. He too sees the problems as partly "structural and cultural". He talks of "the lack of decent housing", "families under stress", and "prevention is cheaper than cure". If I may quote in full: "At the cheap end of the preventive scale, current educational policies now look like cutting down the time that many schools have thought fit to spend on the kind of social education that may help to prevent child abuse continuing to the next generation."

Whitfield and myself are not as extreme as David Dale indicates. We are not advocating a "fashionable" view of teachers as quasi-social workers; we are saying that schools have an important preventive role to play which is properly located within their area of real expertise: namely the school curriculum.

By reinforcing the divisions that exist between professional caring groups, like teachers and social workers, David Dale does nothing to support the multi-professional approach advocated by all the professional agencies in dealing with this critically important area. I may be a teacher and he a social worker; but David and I share a responsibility for the care and protection of the children in our charge.

PETER MAHER  
London Borough of Havering  
Norah Hill Centre  
Norah Hill Road  
Romford

## Separate series

Sir - Your recent review of children's literature ("Storybook worlds", TES, November 6) implied that Century Hutchinson, publishers of *Fairy Stories for Bedtime* are also the publishers of the "Flower Fairy series, first published in the Twenties". That is not so; Blackie were, and remain, the publishers of the Flower Fairies whose creator was Cicely Mary Barker. The Century Hutchinson book is an entirely different product and bears no resemblance to our series.

MARTIN WEST  
Children's Publisher  
Blackie and Son Ltd  
London WC2

## No surprise

Sir - In reply to Michael Jones (TES, November 20) surely there are teachers whose teaching of English is literature-based. It is possible to build work around the literature texts to fulfil the demands of both the "Integrated" English and the literature course. We have been working in this way throughout the school for years. GCSE has not come as a nasty surprise.

LIZ FREETH  
Head of English  
Hatters Lane School  
High Wycombe, Bucks

Sir - Readers with any involvement in biotechnology in schools will have been astonished at one of the conclusions drawn by a conference attended by 85 teachers organized by South East Arts and reported by Tim Conish (TES, November 20): that is, that biotechnology is a visually dull topic to be excluded from media education.

The National Centre for School Biotechnology (NCSB) at the University of Reading can provide a list of resources which shows that it is far from the case. Many on our list are available for visitors to study. Examples which immediately spring to mind include the ICI Pecten story video and the presentation on biotechnology in the BBC Radiovision series, *Life Story*, the BBC Horizon production of the work of Crick and Watson on the structure of DNA, was available to a wider audience.

Last month Professor Watson did the NCSB the honour of coming over from Cold Spring Harbor, New York to address our conference *Biotechnology in Schools* held at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, Westminster on November 20. He showed the audience of 250 delegates that the excitement (and fun) of their work had not lessened in 35 years of re-telling.

But also of importance were the 20 lively contributions to the accompanying exhibition, many of which showed the work of pupils and pupils at work vividly illustrating developments in school biotechnology which are enabling in SSCR, SATRO, TVEI and other local groups. Had some of the teachers at the South East Arts conference been aware of the discussion of these developments - there was a weekend conference in their area in July 1986 at the University of Kent at Canterbury on *Biotechnology and the Curriculum*: a TVEI/STRIP project attended by some 300 delegates, the ASE Annual Conference provides another, regular focus which would realize that biotechnology is no means a visually dull topic in schools.

Dr JOHN GRAINGER  
National Centre for School Biotechnology  
Department of Microbiology  
University of Reading

Letters for publication should be brief as possible and typed on one side of the paper only. The Editor reserves the right to cut or amend them.

There was also an extract from a French translation exam: "The Judge was a solemn type with a rarely humorous moustache."

Members of the maths department show signs of stress. "You can't get anything more explicit than  $x = x^2 + \text{constant}$ ", one apparently declared, while another is recorded as enthusing:

" $g\theta = \frac{1}{2} - \text{it's beautiful!}$ "

Elsewhere there are ominous signs of paranoia in: "I may not be good-looking, but I've got charisma and I can pull the chicks", from the teacher who had received one of life's bigger put-downs. Standing outside a noisy classroom with its door closed, he was told by a colleague, "Just poke your head round the door and give them all a fright."

There is also a definite group which one suspects have been carefully rehearsed. Did anyone really say on the spur of the moment: "Some of you are too lazy to get out of your own way" or the mysterious: "Your lips curl like a scornful railway sandwich".

And did the maths master who was asked "Is ABC any old triangle?" really reply off the cuff that  $x = x^2 + \text{constant}$ , one apparently declared, while another is recorded as enthusing:

" $g\theta = \frac{1}{2} - \text{it's beautiful!}$ "

Occasionally, it seems, staff strike back with the latest gleanings from exam papers:

"Henry VIII regarded the Reformation as a nice little earner";

"Sir Anthony Eden's career was destroyed by the sewage crisis";

"Tess, by Thomas Hardy, is a study in landscape and heroism"; and

"The Romans recruited 10,000 missionaries to guard Hadrian's Wall".

UNA STEPHENS  
ALICIA MCGIVEN  
Balls Park  
Mangrove Road  
Hertford

## Spare place

Sir - Chile may have a questionable political situation, but the great beauty of its countryside is unquestionable. Recently I was fortunate to experience it, first-hand, when I joined an expedition backed by United World College called "The Andes Expedition". For 11 days, 23 young people, aged between 15 and 18, and leaders and helpers were based at an outdoor education centre in Llanquihue, which stands 2,000 metres above sea level in the Andes.

B HARRIS-CURTIS  
Ashridge  
The Mount  
Highgate  
Newbury  
Berkshire







## TALKBACK

LOGO

## Haring off with a turtle

Sean O'Bryne

I'm not too sure about Mike Blumire's description of Logo as a dinosaur (TES October 30). The dinosaurs reigned as the supreme terrestrial vertebrates for about 165 million years, whereas Logo has never really found a suitable habitat in which to flourish.

Logo is certainly a wonderful starting point in computing from which much greater heights can be achieved but must be one of the greatest missed opportunities in the history of computers in schools. Mr Blumire's article can only make this sad state of affairs worse. True, Logo has its aficionados, but on the whole it has made very little impact on the British educational scene and this is not because of any defects in the language itself but because it was never really given a chance. A version for the dominant BBC was too slow in coming; and too many teachers had already become habituated to BBC Basic and were reluctant to explore a different concept in programming. Although Logo misused its chance to be in at the outset of school computing it remains a powerful educational resource and its under-

Its elegant use of procedures and recursive powers more or less force good structured program design, as opposed to long linear sequences encouraged by Basic. Its ability to display graphical mathematical relationships is too good not to be used and at the same time it can clearly demonstrate to any age group the concept of variables in a way which is anything but abstract.

Logo is an invaluable aid in the teaching of the GCSE computer studies and in CPVE courses for 16-17 year olds, many of whom have had no previous experience of computing. In both of these cases, the immediate feedback that Logo gives work wonders in giving the students confidence. They quickly realise that programming a computer is not arcane and difficult but something they can do. With the use of procedures calling other procedures and the easy use of Logo's recursive facilities they soon find how powerful and labour-saving a computer can be. They also very rapidly develop a feel for what can and cannot be done with a computer.

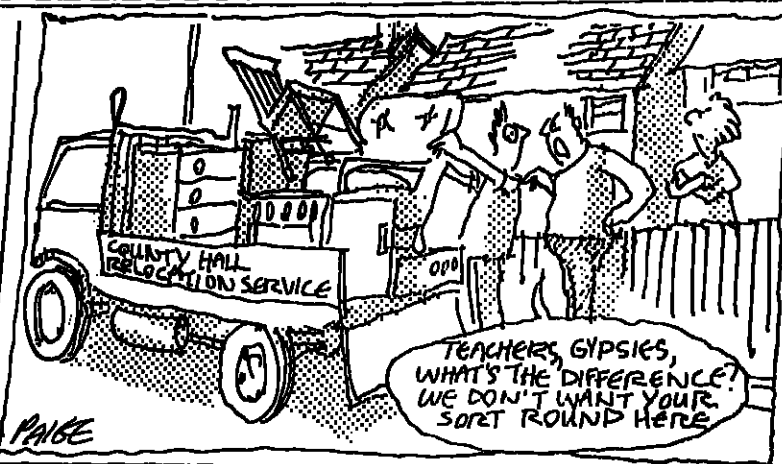
Largely through the use of Logo spectacular advances have been made by students who have achieved little in academic terms from the ages of 11 to 16. These advances have been in their understanding of what computers can and cannot do and how they can help them in every aspect of their work, their understanding of spatial concepts and general numeracy. Above all the imaginative use of Logo has contributed much to the students' self-confidence.

Having seen what can be achieved so quickly with computer neophytes, it is extremely sad that its take-up should have been so piecemeal in British schools and so subject to individual teacher interest. It is simply wrong to "unnecessarily diminish" its potential of the pupils.

The speed with which this age group can acquire basic computer literacy, is remarkable and entirely due to the immediacy, power and flexibility of the Logo language. The students, having acquired much needed confidence, easily progress to the use of the standard applications software and other language packages.

Logo is not a language for many different software media. Desktop publishing, word processing, spreadsheets, databases, interfacing, Pascal, basic and assembly language all have parts to play and in the fast-growing world of computing and IT, there will always be new ways to do things. But the tyranny of Basic is responsible for more computer lumbering inefficiency and hidebound methodology than Logo ever could be.

Sean O'Bryne is in charge of cross curricular computing at St Philip's Sixth Form College, Birmingham.



## REMOVAL EXPENSES

## Rough deal for teachers

John Carey

Looking for a new job? Searching every week in *The TES* for an elusive promotion in a new authority? Think very carefully. Getting the right job, but with the wrong authority, could cost you dear.

Whether the new post is a promotion in the teaching profession or a career move into local education administration, the first moves are the same. You write for the further details (remembering to enclose a SAE), decide the post is ideal, fill in the form in your best handwriting, get an interview and are offered the job.

However, after this stage it all changes, as most authorities treat their new employees very differently, depending on whether they will occupy a post at County Hall or stand in front of the blackboard. As a teacher you get little or nothing in the way of help with your move, but the newly appointed educational administrator gets a generous package to help during the

no scheme for the reimbursement of legal, removal, or any other expenses connected with a change of home.

Perhaps the attraction of the West is diminishing, but a post in County Durham looks wonderful. The job is attractive, and there is a relocation scheme. However, think carefully before you haul yourself and your family to the North East, as these allowances are not payable if your salary on appointment is over £13,653.

Back to Wiltshire. In this attractive county, schemes operate for both teachers and County Hall administrators. However, teachers know their place in Wiltshire, as the lodging allowance is £10 per week compared with £19.40 per week for administrative staff. Teachers also move for less: a maximum grant of £115, compared with free removal costs and a disturbance allowance of up to £1,220 given to educational administrators.

Although the schemes operated by the county seem fine, teachers are given a rough deal if they choose to move from one authority to another. If a scheme does operate for teachers, it seems almost always to be less generous than that in force for administrators.

In advertisements for teachers there is rarely mention of the relocation packages. Recent advertisements for leading secondary schools in Devonport, Plymouth and Exeter, for example, help with relocation, but for administrative staff, the same authorities advertise relocation packages of £6,000 in Bromley and Croydon and "generous expenses" in Essex.

To gain wide experience in a variety of schools and colleges inevitably means costly moves at some stage in your career. The local education authorities seem to accept that it is staff who have the wider range of working in other authorities, and that help must be given to them. So why is that help not offered to teachers?

The value of this package depends on where you live, but for someone taking up the position from the Midlands it could be worth about £3,250. What about Devon? Sorry, there is

## ACCOUNTS

## Real books

David Stadman

When the smoke has cleared from the battlefields of school curriculum and administration, we shall face what we have always faced: classrooms of children needing to learn about life and about themselves.

One small addition to the timetable, of value to everybody, is a simple manual book-keeping. It has the merits of Latin or Greek, in demanding rational, orderly thinking and it is better than a dead language as it has a relevance to everybody's life: the home; in employment, unemployment or self-employment; and in voluntary organizations.

It is also a basic vocational skill, but more relevant than the mindless demand for "O levels, including Maths and English" which, broadly translated, means to be able to read, write and add up, and have middle-class pretensions. Book-keeping demands recognition of realities and close inspection of vague words and terms (like funding, grant, resources, fee-of-charge, interest free and "we cannot afford not to"). It has few equipment costs: paper, pen, pad, eraser, ruler, and instruction sheets only. And teachers, can acquire all the book-keeping skills they need on a teach-yourself basis. Any subject teacher could teach book-keeping, once the skills have been acquired and it could prove a useful supplementary source of income for specialist teachers.

Primitive communities take their first step towards development when they first employ a book-keeper. Youngsters start to mature when they see the merit of forgoing weekly sweets for a monthly paperback, or the desire to buy a bicycle.

It is a neutral subject, accessible and acceptable regardless of political ideology, religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds. It simply traces the movements of money and records transactions, providing periodic "snapshots" of an individual's or an organization's financial health. Book-keepers, unaccountants and financiers, neither manipulate nor breed money.

The margin between failure and success in any sphere, and at any level of society, could in most cases be bridged if there were an accurate and thoughtful recording of the inflow and outflow of money.

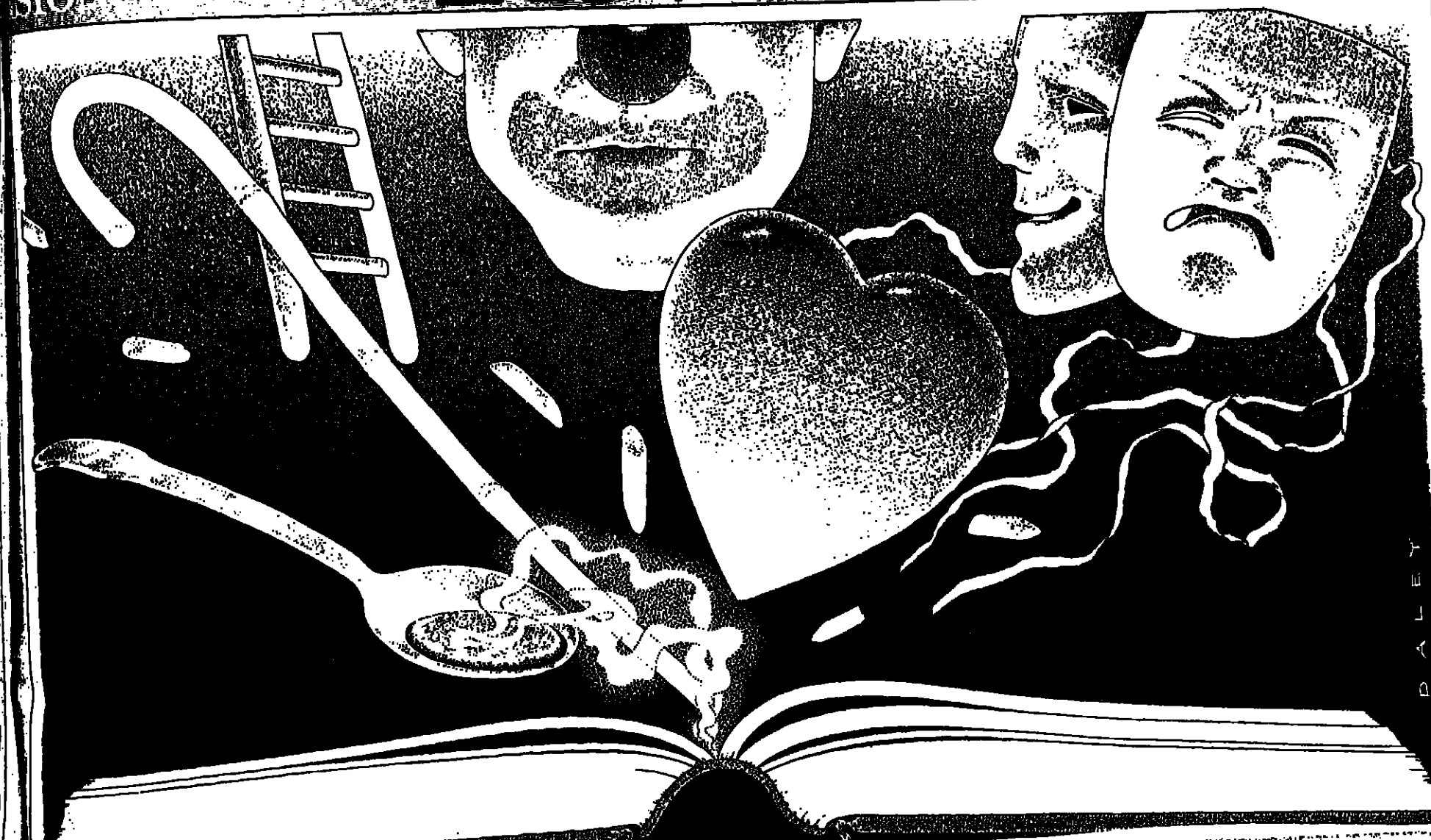
The former Frensham Heights headmaster — by all accounts, an admirably humane and tolerant man — was almost certainly wrong here. Much more appealing — and probably more accurate — is J and W Ball's assessment: "there is a touch of the actor in every good schoolmaster" (J and W Ball, *Stockport Grammar School 1487-1987*, Old Vicarage Publications, 0947818 06 5, £5.95). An opinion amply confirmed by many of the stories told in a batch of recently-published teachers' memoirs and school histories.

Three rousing cheers, then, for such as Mr Johnston, formerly head of history at Stockport Grammar, who "led his Bride from Church under an archway of History notebooks suddenly held in a row by two lines of boys from school". Then there was "Ossie" Thomas, the headmaster of Pontardawe Boys' Secondary Technical School who, upon hearing two of his pupils faring joyously on the premises ("Oh, breaking wind in public, is it?"), promptly administered a particularly noxious palliative, the ingredients of which were known only to him. It did the trick: adolescent flatulence was thereafter expressed in much less robust terms (B Samuel, *Rugby: Body and Soul*, Gomer Press, 086383 289X, £5.95).

But it is undoubtedly Dean Close's William Judson ("Judd") who emerges as the most agreeably wayward academic of these memoirs. The teacher, known to posterity as "Mr Judd, that man of mud", the verified sneer of former pupil James Elroy Flecker — clearly earned the lasting respect of other, more charitable, schoolboys (deposing his false teeth in his handkerchief,

Richard Strong is county adviser for mathematics in Somerset.

## Review



## MASTERLY MEMOIRS

Laurence Alster investigates the spate of school histories and teachers' reminiscences

One's fondest memories of school arguably revolve around those flamboyant or outlandish characters who could turn even an unpromising double lesson on Friday afternoon into a passable pantomime. So it is all too easy to disagree with Paul Roberts's observation, apropos such clowns, that "when one played a part in real life the result was always less attractive than being one's self" (P Daniel, *Frensham Heights, 1925-49: A Study in Progressive Education*, £7).

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Stationers' Company's School 1858-1983. Stationers' Hall, £9).

Whether such treatment would have saved one ex-pupil (the "only" one, mind) from later conviction for murder is open to debate. But at least Baynes acknowledges the presence of those who gain distinction more through disregard for than observance of the rules. Such "eminent malefactors", as Bryan Matthews calls them (B Matthews, *Eminent Uppingshamians*, Neville and Harding Ltd, 0 948028 01 7, £8.50), seldom surface in books that prefer, for obvious reasons, to publicize gains rather than losses. Indeed, the closest we get to spotting rotters is with the acknowledgement that bullying is, and always has been, a permanent feature of life at school. H H Munro's only half-funny observation that "You can't expect a boy to be vicious till he's been to a good school" is indirectly endorsed by writers who clearly would like to ignore this stain on their school's reputation, but feel morally obliged to acknowledge its (past) presence. Stuart Andrews refers euphemistically to "the cult of masculinity that characterized the public schools in the closing years of the (19th) century" (S Andrews and C Trafford, *125 Years of Clifton College*, Frise Matthews, £2), and former Dean Close teacher D L Graham is similarly oblique when he remarks that, as recently as the 50s, "the public grammar school academic ethos was very hard on the boy of school age" (D L Graham, *Shades of the Prison School* (R G Wickham, *Shades of the Prison School* (R G Wickham, *Shades of the Prison School* (R G Wickham, 0 946053 01 4, £15). Time House, Foxbury Press, 0 946053 01 4, £15).

Of course, the photographs reproduced in these books give no signs of the intrigues, dramas and various forms of torment that go on within the walls before which generations of children have been carefully posed and dutifully recorded. They show instead the changing images that schools wished to project of themselves and their prime exhibits, pictures designed to reflect the ideal schoolboy or girl as then popularly conceived. The healthily-changed nature of school life is well illustrated by these pictures. Two plates in *The Kent College Saga*, for instance; one shows the sixth form of 1898, a group of starched, crinoline, unarguably glum ladies who embody in both expression and posture the narrow orthodoxies that passed for education in those days. Beneath, a happy serum of girls from 1983/84, cheerfully mugging at the camera. A marvellous, instructive pairing (M James, *The Kent College Saga 1886-1986*, Kent College School, £6.75). Just as cheering is the contrast between the appearance of the players in the Stockport Grammar School Staff v Boys tennis match, 1923 — jaws firm, eyes narrow, hair lavishly brilliant — and a portrait of the 1974 1st Rugby XV, extravagant grins and tumbling locks all of them. In the Royal Grammar School book William Lough rather sniffily refers to such displays as symptomatic of the "accelerating teenism" that so irritates some teachers; but it is hard not to conclude that, if it means one generation looking so much more cheerful than another, no great harm is caused by forgiveness of whatever sartorial weirdness are currently in fashion.

Happily, all these records tell a like story — one of increased tolerance, humanity and, of course, vastly improved educational standards; the general adoption, as J H Higginson puts it, "of a vision of education as first and foremost a human relationship, an interplay of civilized individuals in which encouragement or potentiality is the chief consideration" (J H Higginson, *A School is Born: A History of Arnold Grammar School*, Nottinghamshire, The Book Guild, 0 86332 199 2, £8.50). And this is exactly as it should be. At a time when we are increasingly being urged to educate our children with training, Higginson's is a welcome reminder that school life should be at least as much, and preferably more, about filling hearts as wallets.

Laurence Alster teaches at South Downs FE College, Hampshire.

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## MATHS TEACHING

## In need of support

Richard Strong

I am, however, appalled when I reflect upon the fact that mathematics teachers are having to grapple with the enormous challenges of assessing GCSE coursework against a background of so many other developments and uncertainties and so little support. To focus on the mathematics course-work assessment; certain issues need to be urgently addressed nationally. The first is that mathematics is now deemed to be a practical subject. National subject criterion 3.17 states: "Carry out practical and investigative work, and undertake extended pieces of work."

No longer can or should the mathematics teachers have to cope with traditionally large class sizes, certainly in the upper secondary years. The demands have changed and so must the conditions.

The relative cost of reducing class sizes even if only in the later secondary years would not be excessive in a national budget and would do wonders

for teacher morale, quality of assessment and bringing the task of coursework assessment into the bounds of reasonableness.

The second point to be recognized is that coursework assessment, certainly in the initial years of GCSE is more time-consuming than the previous demands of GCE and CSE. Marking a class exercise was far less demanding than following the mathematical argument of several coursework assignments to seek possible evidence for an external moderator.

Incidentally one GCSE group's moderators have not yet met to determine what they will consider to accept for a coursework submission. Schools are entering candidates for the 1988 submission — is this a fair way to run a business for teachers and pupils?

The third issue which needs to be recognized is that of the part-time mathematics teacher and the associated problem of teachers without a

permanent base. The part-timers from other disciplines who need to fill up a timetable (and that is perfectly understandable) and can control the more difficult groups need equally to be acquainted with the rigours of coursework assessment as the full-time mathematics specialist. Furthermore, no longer can they dodge from room to room as, like other practical subjects, they need a base for their materials.

While valuable steps have been taken to introduce alternative assessment procedures to the single final exam, they have also brought with them new demands for broadening teaching styles and learning experiences, recording and reporting procedures, and needs for training. It seems that not only have the goals been moved, but also the game is being played on a different pitch and with a different shaped ball.

Many of the present developments in mathematics education are exciting and valuable. In Somerset, mathematics teachers and the local authority are working together to make GCSE operate. I personally would be saddened if so many good initiatives were hampered because, nationally, there was not enough practical support for teachers.

Richard Strong is county adviser for mathematics in Somerset.



## BOOKS



Edmund Heep's problem page from Pure Posy, by Patsy Simmonds

Cartoon books are traditional Christmas presents, of course, because there's not too much of that boring old reading to do. By Christmas afternoon, most of us will be as torpid as an iguana on a hot rock: what more innocuous pastime could there be than letting our glazed eyes play indolently over some amusing drawings? But be warned: some of these books have less to do with the cosy diversions of Christmas than with a New Year that is poised to burst upon us like some dreadful boil.

Let's start with something pleasantly innocuous, though: Punch's collection of intergalactic jokes, *Space Out Among the Galaxies*. Some of these cartoons do nod in the direction of social comment ("Agreed, then - no sign of intelligent life on Earth?" say the aliens who have landed in a deserted housing estate) but for the most part the cartoons are on the safest ground - indeed, on home ground, since most of what we imagine about extra-terrestrial life has been picked up from cartoons in the first place.

Themes, such as "Take us to your leader" (on Schubert's doorstep), the vintage "Take us to your leader" (to Macmillan on the grouse moors, looking every bit the Scottish old-age pensioner) and my favourite, Michael Heath's early biplane pilots, complete with goggles and not-so-smiles, jump out of their beds saying, "Actually, we're from another planet, but we're not quite as advanced as you are. There is nothing here to offend, unless, of course, you're also from

another planet, in which case you might find the humour a bit alienist. Alienating it is not - a bumper book of classic gags.

Claude Serre's D.I.V. has blood-spattered end-papers, and anyone who has ever tried to hammer a nail will recognize the speed with which Do-It-Yourself can lead to Do-In-Yourself. Serre's D.I.V. freaks up power drills with telescopic sights; rig up chainsaws to exercise bikes; and hurt themselves in a variety of grisly ways. There is even a D.I.V. Jesus nailing himself to the cross, and inevitably having difficulty in finishing the job. Most of Serre's humour is not especially black, however: just inventive and achingly true to life.

His technique is also almost totally visual: many of the cartoons need no

Some evoke disgust, such as the penicillin sharper from which a small pool of blood seeps out; but much of the imagery reflects the hilarious struggles of mankind in that realm of eugenic, home decorating, Serre puts the pain back into paint, and establishes D.I.V. as one of the great human dramas, along with birth and death.

Whatever Happened to Janet? John, a friend of a worker's co-operative and funded by the BBC, is part of a series of comics called No Kidding.

the joys of a concentration camp called the First Lady's face falls off, amorous whales make it with quaternary submarines... Steve Bell's fierce and farcical review of the year's events is not for the fastidious, but must find its way into all subversive stockings: it's hot stuff. He's clever, he's furious, and he's fun.

Clare Breche's *Where's My Baby Now?* is a series of comics called No Kidding.

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## Burps and belly laughs

Sue Limb prescribes some Christmas relief

They are comics with commitment and are directed at young people. *Whatever Happened...* presents a devastating picture of urban blight from the near future: The New Leisure Age in which young people are entertained by Zilich TV's world of moronic disc-jockey claptrap and patronizing Janet and John of ancient history, and invite four unemployed young couples to compete for the honour of the leading roles. They are given a picture of a house: all they have to do is find it.

The story revolves around the adventures of the young people wandering through the urban jungle in search of the illusory house (it turns out to be a fake house in the TV studio, and the winners are to live in it under the shadow of a TV camera).

Despite the uncompromising grimness of the message, the political satire is sharp and the text witty and entertaining.

And now for something really tasteless: *Boonies Back*. *Guardian* readers will be familiar with Steve Bell's regular strip-cartoon: a stream of Swifflin bile directed impartially against politicians of the Left and Right. It's drawn with crude energy and the voices which roar out at us show that Steve Bell has a devilish ear for dialogue, too. "Good news, Cyril James Anderson!" booms a voice in the Manchester night. "It is I, Lord God Almighty, and thou shalt know me by my blazing hairstyle!"

For Steve Bell nothing is sacred. Members of the Royal Family wear condoms on their heads to help them

her late Ms. lands a dream part in the new Merchant Ivory movie, at the same time as discovering that she's pregnant. Her hypochondriacal Italian cleaning lady offers herself as surrogate mother and they zoom off to the fetal transfer centre. But the embryo in question has a picturesque career: confusions at the clinic send it off in a vat of semen from a prize Charolais bull, and Raquel's baby is eventually born to a rather puzzled cow. This causes the mass suicide of a guilt-stricken farming family: a hilarious culmination to a tale of biting wit and acute social observation.

And what can one say about Posy? It's true that she concentrates her gaze on the liberal intelligentsia and their agonizings, but her work has such affection, wit and energy that at her best she seems to me to be the Mozart of the comic strip.

*Spaced Out: Punch Among the Galaxies*. Edited by William Hewison. Granta Books £2.95, 0246 132396.

*Whatever Happened to Janet and John*. By Charles Pentie and John Sanck. No Kidding Publications, Calvert Press £2, 08473 22 92.

*Boonies Back*. By Steve Bell. Methuen £3.95, 0 413 15890 X.

*Where's My Baby Now?* By Claire Breche. Methuen £4.95, 0 413 1712 05.

*Posy*. By Patsy Simmonds. Jonathan Cape £7.95, 0224 0248 X.

## The forgotten war

John Crossland on reassessments of the Korean War

The Korean War. By Max Hastings. Michael Joseph £14.95, 0 7181 2068 X.

Korea: the War before Vietnam. By Calum A. MacDonald. Macmillan £25, 0 333 3301 0.

On the morning of July 27, 1953, two groups of story-faced soldiers, one Asian, the other Western, entered a temporary wooden hut on an arbitrary map reference and put their signatures to an armistice which suited neither side but brought to an end the Korean War.

It was a conflict that had started for the West as a kind of crusade, to save South Korea from North Korean military domination, and remained the sole example of the United Nations entering a shooting war as one of the protagonists.

But three years later, those nations, and not least the Americans, who had borne the greatest burden, and any of whom saw Korea as a chance to stop the onward march of Communism, were eager to be quit of the war, which had cost them 33,629 dead and 105,785 wounded and a badly-dented national ego, involving the first peace treaty in their history where they had not emerged as victors. The British Commonwealth losses, by comparison, were only 1,263 killed and 4,817 wounded, but included a large number of National Servicemen.

An abiding sense of the futility of it all, and that Korea remained until recently the forgotten war. Now two books, and particularly the work of a lecturer in American studies, who fought successfully to ensure the release of sensitive Pentagon files, have rescued this most important "small war" of the second half of the 20th Century from oblivion and present us with a new perspective on the conflict.

Max Hastings has used his well-tried formula of interviewing across a spectrum of veterans, including Chinese, and using those reminiscences to illuminate the military history, which was confusing then and needs skill of this order to clarify.

However, so much does Hastings depend on this living testimony - he acknowledges more than 150 sources above the rank of major - that the wider picture tends to be lost sight of. He tells it the way it was with great skill, but for the global political im-

plications we have to turn to a slimmer but in some ways more important book.

Calum MacDonald's researches in the Pentagon archives caused a furore one or two years ago after they formed the basis of a *Time* magazine programme on BBC2. Controversy raged over two points: MacDonald's discovery that General Collins, the American Chief of Staff, authorized regular logistical flights in Korea, carrying nuclear components and, a highly-charged issue at the time of the Cruise programme, the amount of say implementation, the amount of say Britain would have in the use of its own bases as launch pads for nuclear attacks in the event of a general war with the Communist block.

What MacDonald was able to discover after persistent refusals to take no for an answer from American authorities, was that Britain ran the risk of being left in the dark in the event of a nuclear war at the time of Korea.

Both authors make good use of the abundance of new documentation available on Korea, but the issue of the use of the A bomb, which Hastings leaves only partially answered, MacDonald presses home with an interesting analysis, based on the recently declassified official record.

The Korean War still strikes chords, if you have an attuned ear. This month has seen a breakthrough in the democratization of South Korea with the elections, which are themselves a propaganda curtain-raiser for next year's Olympics in Seoul. Such liberalizing trends come not before time, as many of the United Nations' combatants deplored the regime they were fighting for and have had no reason to change their views since.

Also, our beleaguered Western cynicism at their combat the danger of a Korean trade expansion, part of the new Asian trade peril. Meanwhile, North Korea and United Nations representatives continue to meet inconclusively on the true line of 34 years ago and the odd South Korean or American is killed in no man's land.

But although Hastings remains convinced that the war sacrifices were justified by today's position in the Far East - and it is hard to fault his case - MacDonald's sub-title "the war before Vietnam," is a reminder that the Americans learned nothing about East Asia, and forgave nothing.

## BOOKS



Princess Alice, Princess Alfreda and Princess Helena, 1947. From Franz Xaver Winterhalter and the Court of Europe 1830-1870, a sumptuous catalogue of the exhibition currently at the National Portrait Gallery (£35 and £12.95 paperback)

## Thoughts on thinking

The Great Philosophers: An Introduction to Western Philosophy. By Brian Magee. BBC Publications £14.95, 0 563 20583 0.

Letters to Thinkers: Further Thoughts on Lateral Thinking. By Edward De Bono. Harrop. £12.95 0 245 54575 1.

"Thinking about thinking about thinking" is the title of the first chapter in Edward De Bono's new book, which collects 30 of the subscription newsletters he wrote between 1983 and 1984 to businessmen who were interested in lateral thinking. Advising them to set aside "thinking time" during each busy day, and to conceive of a "thinking place" as a refuge from conventional assumptions, he prescribes an objective - "to find a source of thinking". This, he warns, is not as easy as it sounds. "You could read traditional volumes on traditional philosophical theories, but that is a long task and the thinking used is often neither practical nor interesting."

Also, our beleaguered Western cynicism at their combat the danger of a Korean trade expansion, part of the new Asian trade peril. Meanwhile, North Korea and United Nations representatives continue to meet inconclusively on the true line of 34 years ago and the odd South Korean or American is killed in no man's land.

philosophy", he interviewed Herbert Marcuse, Chomsky and Quine about their work, talking to other philosophers and teachers of philosophy, such as A. J. Ayer and Iris Murdoch, on such wide-ranging topics as "Logical Positivism and its Legacy", "Philosophy and Literature", "Moral Philosophy and 'Philosophy and Politics'".

Both then and now, Magee has chosen in the published text to call the interviews "dialogues", implicitly claiming for himself a higher status (than that of an interviewer). Since the discussions were unscripted, his function during recording sessions was to act as a referee, making sure that the speakers gave as good an answer as they could, and that the questions were never sure non-swimming viewers are never lured out of their depth by craftily phrased questions or fast-talking academics. Whenever the argument picks up pace, he slows it down, reiterating points which have already been made and stopping at regular intervals to recapitulate and sum up. Even on television he tends to talk too

print there's still less justification for his refusal to play a subordinate role. Since the texts can be - and have been - edited to clarify obscurities, and since the reader, unlike the viewer, can go back over anything he hasn't understood, he doesn't really need a middle man, but Magee would not have been content with the role of editor. Reading Ayer on "Frege, Russell and Modern Logic", or Bernard Williams on Descartes, or Frederick Copleston on Schopenhauer, or John Passmore on Hume, or Myles Burnyeat on Plato, it's annoying to have so much inter-

Though Magee is always vigorous in attempting to heat down thickets of confusion, this is sometimes counter-productive. During the discussion on Wittgenstein, he gives himself a third of a page on the relationship between language and external reality. His final words are "Is this really what the later Wittgenstein is saying?"

Answers John Searle. "I think, in fact, the way that you have stated the position is a characteristic way in which Wittgenstein is misunderstood."

In such a project no editor would expect everyone to agree with his allocation of space, but some of Magee's decisions are distinctly odd. Hegel has to share a "dialogue" with Marx. Kierkegaard is awarded one sentence in the discussion on "Husserl, Heidegger and Modern Existentialism". Bertrand Russell gets more space than Sartre, while a whole dialogue is lavished on "The American Pragmatists".

On the other hand, anyone who sees the programmes or reads the book will be left in no danger of believing that philosophical thinking is uninteresting. Edward De Bono's *Letters to Thinkers*, catchpenny title, *Letters to Thinkers*, provides evidence of his keen business sense, but he's doing little more than rummage through the intellectual's box of tricks for devices that could seem commercially useful. Occasionally he makes an interesting point, as when he says God is incapable of thinking, since thinking is always movement forwards from a position of incomplete knowledge, but, far from being addressed to those who have never thought about what thinking is.

Ronald Hayman

## Masters of mimicry

Imitations of Immortality. Edited by E. O. Parrott. Penguin £4.95, 0 14 007143 1.

How to Become Absurdly Well-Informed About the Famous and Infamous. Edited by E. O. Parrott. Viking £9.95, 0 670 81441 5.

Hot on the heels of *Imitations of Immortality* - a splendidly varied collection of spites, parodies, para-poems and pastiches - comes *How to Become Absurdly Well-Informed About the Famous and Infamous*, another entirely successful attempt by E. O. Parrott to gather together the nation's most talented parodists for the amusement of those who relish learning worn lightly and laughingly.

As the title suggests, the book consists of potted biographies, in diverse forms, of the great, the good, and those remembered with feelings rather more mixed. Margaret Rogers, for example, presents a piqued Hitler in Kiplingesque form ("O it's Adolf, this an Adolf that ain't lock the bugger up! But it's 'Thank you' and 'Hell Hitler' when I'm cuddled up to Krupp"), while Culligan, in N. J. Warburton's social worker's report, is diagnosed with earnest but dandy inaccuracy: "He is a devoted family man and my conversations with his sisters have revealed that he is able to show them great affection."

Devotees of *carmen figurata* will be amused and amazed by Noel Petty's tributes to Chaplin (verse in bowler shape) and Maurice Chevalier (straw boater) - but even these are eclipsed by Petty's remarkable fugal ode to J.S.

Bach. And if Mary Holby's verse forms are somewhat more conventional, they are no less distinguished for that: "Twinkle, twinkle little star" provides the framework for his furious mutterings against the Inquisition - plus a Hannibal celebrated to the tune of "He'll be coming round the mountain".

There are many more, equally noteworthy. But given the link between form and content so necessary to successful parody, no one shows greater versatility than Martin Fagg in marrying style to subject. The Celtic contingent (Shaw, Wilde and Synge) is hilariously vent up in a playlet set in a shebeen, skilful even by the exacting standards of County Mayo. Rousseau is, sociologically memorialized in *Frangin's*, and the life and works of John Galsworthy are recounted through the minutes of a strife-torn council meeting. Elsewhere, Basil Ransome-Davies offers a fittingly muscle-bound summary of the Hemingway story; Robin Hood's adventures are tuncefully narrated by D. H. Lawrence via Peter Norman; and Gerard Benson's Sterne-like reply to Parrott's request for a biographical sketch of the wordy wanderer is, quite simply, hilarious.

As, indeed, are most of the other contributions to a collection that, remarkably, contains a joy on every page. This book will long be cherished by those who love language used stylishly, energetically, and with coruscating, caustic wit.

Laurence Alster

## Theatrical relations

Ellen and Edy. By Joy Melville. Pandora Press £14.95, 0 86358 252 4, 0 86358 078 5.

This delightful book is a joint biography of Ellen Terry and her daughter Edith Craig. It recounts their lives from Ellen's birth in 1847 to Edith's death exactly 100 years and one month later.

Though she died in 1928, Ellen's star still shines. There are those living who remember her extraordinary charm and presence, the adoration she excited in her audiences over three continents for more than 60 years. Her Lyceum partnership with Henry Irving is theatrical history. Despite an irregular life - three husbands, two illegitimate children, two or more lovers - she was the darling of the Victorian

theatre, commanded to perform at Windsor, made a DBI by Victoria's grandson.

Edy fared less well. Highly intelligent, her perfectionism made her difficult to work with. Yet she inspired respect and loyalty in professional and amateur for her skills as a comic, humor and stage director - particularly of the feminist Pioneer Players which she founded.

Joy Melville explores the passionate love binding Ellen and Edy, presenting them sympathetically in their human complexity, dealing straightforwardly with Edy's lesbian ménage. Fascinating glimpses of Irving, Godwin, Gordon Craig et al, and a wealth of detail illuminating 19th-century theatre practice are additional delights in a thoroughly absorbing book.

John James

## A political survivor

Charles II, Royal Politician. By J. R. Jones. Allen & Unwin £20, 0 04 942196 4.

Cynical opportunism helped Charles II survive through troubled times, and it underpins him to our own century. Victorian historians of staid days deplored the lazy hedonist who lowered the moral tone, set back the political clock, and shamed honest Englishmen. Publication early this century of the Treasury Papers began the revision process, with hints of a very different monarch, facing pressure with shrewd intelligence.

Admiration culminated in Arthur Bryant's biography of 1931, while Antonia Fraser's of 1979, judged Charles eminently "the right king for that strange, demanding season in which he lived". Bravery in adversity was applauded, while the 14 acknowledged bastards now merited respect rather than censure.

J. R. Jones does not add to the pile of biographies. This is a fine study of the political world in which Charles operated, and a judicious assessment of his abilities and achievements. After a hard apprenticeship in Scotland and exile, Charles set out to rule strange territory: post-revolutionary England.

He had to cope with selfish and short-sighted parliaments, contentious magnates, dangerous Continental wars, and the unrelenting moods of mass opinion. Combining courage, cunning, dishonesty and ruthlessness, he manoeuvred among unrelenting and ever-changing dangers. Thanks in large measure to Charles, royal monarchy eventually gave place to a new order. "By using his political skills adroitly", concludes Professor Jones, "Charles saved the nation from... destructive renewal of the Civil Wars".

Tom Coyle

## The moon book, please!

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Eric Carle has a great and deserved reputation as a writer of picture books. *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me* (Hodder £7.95) is just as inventive as ever in illustration, but disappointingly saccharine in the text. Monica wants her dad to get her the moon, and he does. Along the way there are some good fold-outs, but the moral, despite the cover's rave about an "inspiring" tale, is puritanically found dubious. As is so often the case, however, children adore it and want the "moon book" again and again. It does afford a memorable way of teaching about the phases of the moon.

Another moon book with a moral is *The Farmer and the Moon* by Anne-Lise Lusset, illustrated by Jozef Wilkon (North South £6.95). This, on the contrary, is a most impressive tale about neither being miserly nor imprudent, with Changellesque drawings. An excellent story-time/discussion read.

A number of new early reading books also have moral themes. There is a new series of Let's Read Together from MacDonald (£2.95 each). Catherine Stedman (a psychologist) has written four right-on stories about an enterprising, cross with mixed-race grandfather. Toni Goffe's drawings are a

bit too messy, but early readers really enjoy the puzzle element in each picture, and the text is entertaining enough to read or hear read a number of times. Find the Spees. A Fast Move and Grandpa's Birthday are all good value but Gran makes a dolls' house, the biggest hit. Resourcefulness, helpfulness and practical ability are well displayed.

Another well-known writer, Leila Berg, has produced a series called *Steep Street* (Methuen £2.50 each). Having Friends, Call That a Hat! Roast and Mr Brown, and Loving Jonathan Jones all deal with the adventures of some young children living on a steep street in some semi-rural/northern setting. Lisa Kopper's drawings are setting. Lisa Kopper's drawings are setting. Lisa Kopper's drawings are setting.

Bill Gillham's series for Methuen, under the rubric "Paired-Reading Storybooks" (£2.50 each) is simpler. With just a line or two of text per page, compared to the whole short-story of the two series above, he traces the everyday stories of Gerlie's Goldfish, Scribble Sam, Last One in Bed and Who Needs a Haircut? Lively sketches by Gerald Rose accompany each story. This established series has rather the



From: Kate Greenaway's Moomin Goose, published as a boxed set of three board books by Deutsch (£6.95).

flavour of anecdote, which should make it popular with nursery-age children. The paired-reading element is just the same as any home-reading scheme.

Jiggle Wiggle Prance by Sally Noll (Julia MacRae £5.95) is a word-mimic picture book. A roughish collection of animals jiggle, wiggle and prance about, block-lettered verbs follow. "FOLLOW, FLY, SWING" for instance. The idea is fine and children are interested in the names of the animals, but the text is not very useful. First of all, the block-letters are confusingly contrary to most schools' practice, and secondly they do not clearly relate to the picture.

Identification is a necessary prelude to reading and using references. Where's Wally (Walker £5.95), though the sort of book to make any adult (particularly a moderately short-sighted one) blush, is an excellent tool for identification practice. Martin Handford has wasted not a centimetre of his large pages. Wally, a bespectacled, amiable clown-figure, ambles through



a great variety of scenes, from street to bench to train station to zoo, losing on the way parts of his attire. Can you spot him? Can you spot where he left his stick, his kettle, his rucksack? Can you spot any from a large check-list of amusing people and incidents in the various scenes? Good holiday reading from 3 up to 7 at least, and the kind of book which as a birthday present to a reader would keep him or her occupied for a whole day.

A simpler kind of search occupies the young female in *Is Anyone There?* (Blackie £6.50). Una Lenzy, with soothing illustrations by Maureen Calvani, traces a little girl through garden and house to find mother nursing a baby, and a warm bed with teddy in it. For younger readers, especially tired ones, very comforting. Ann Jonas in *Where Can It Be?* (Julia MacRae £3.25) tackles much the same theme more brashly. The bold typeface of the text accompanies illustrations in bright primary colours with a few flaps to lift. Although the story is simpler, this is more suitable for beginning readers.

Victoria Neumark



## Television

## Acquired taste

"Childhood was born around the end of the 17th century; it's dying round about the end of the 20th century", says psychologist David Lewis (Brass Tacks, BBC2, December 15) was exaggerating the extent to which people in the 18th and 19th centuries actually enjoyed what he would define as "childhood". The difference between most children in the past and today's "trendy toddlers" or "semi-literate sexually provocative pseudo-adults" is that those who were formerly exploited as producers are now exploited as consumers; and in a capitalist society there can be no happier state, surely, than that.

The kids who took part in the studio discussion were bound, in any case, to forfeit the argument. Had they been innocent and naive, they would surely have understood what these solemn grown-ups were talking about. As it was they proved articulate and sensible, instantly condemning themselves as precocious adults. "I hadn't actually realised how much pressure I was under", one of them remarked, slyly undermining the premise of the debate.

What we find most distasteful in young "pseudo-adults" is the way they reflect the values of real adults like ourselves. Their passion for cult figures, their obsession with appearance and style, their abusive language and violent behaviour, their cynicism and their hunger for status and material possessions are acquired characteristics which they acquired from us. They are just a part of society, and not the worst part by any means.

World in Action (ITV, December 14) did make a connection between violence in schools, and the sense of hopelessness induced by growing up in an inner city environment, but from then on the investigation lurched off in two or three different directions.

Aston Manor in Birmingham was cited as an example of a comprehensive where good teaching and discipline were successful in dealing with disruptive pupils. Elsewhere we saw local authorities failing to give support to state schools and were told that the possibility of opting-out would intensify the problems of those that remained in the control of their L.E.A.s. In the end, the programme's advice to parents seemed to be to get out of the state system at all costs, if necessary via an appropriate religious conversion.

The state comprehensive got unexpected support from a quite different quarter. The Beldebeke Tapes is an enjoyable comedy-thriller with more comedy than thrills in which the main characters are played by James Bolam and Barbara Flynn, ex-teachers. They serve under a head whose belief in traditional values extends to wearing a gown and expressing firm disapproval when unmarried members of his staff share a room in the same flat. All this seems as improbable as the plot, involving a mysterious tape-recording about nuclear waste and an armed housebreaker from MI5. But the exchanges in the corridors of the school hit just the right note. It is not often that television depicts the friendly relationships that actually do exist in some schools, believe it or not, between pupils and staff.

There was also a surprising report on Education Extra (Channel 4, December 14) from Hungary where they are apparently edging away from a centralised education system and encouraging the bits that a national curriculum tends to leave out. It may be, according to one Hungarian expert, that "we are moving closer to each other from opposite directions", but I doubt whether our Secretary of State sees it in those terms.

## Grim battlefield

AIDS Now, Channel 4, January 8, 15, 22, 29, February 5, 12.

Almost a year ago, in March 1987, the BBC and TV made simultaneous attempts to warn their viewers about Aids. They were faced with difficult decisions. They had, belatedly, to deal with a pressing emergency and to put across delicate and unpleasant facts. They wanted to inform and to create a sense of urgency in a population so far removed from the disease, without arousing hysteria. Using a recipe of documentary, humour, discussion, phone-ins and expert opinion, they did what they could and, all things considered, managed rather well.

Of course, this was not the end of the story. Television has returned to the subject from time to time and AIDS Now is a series of six programmes which Channel 4 has commissioned from three different production companies, to assess the state of knowledge about Aids. They are less concerned with getting the message about Aids across to an audience of teenagers and young adults, than with appraising the social and political implications of the disease, including the methods by which it might be controlled.

Because the series is made by different production teams, it reflects a variety of different approaches, from conventional documentary to a discussion between a group of people, half of whom were HIV positive, living together for a week in a house in Scotland (February 12). This last programme is produced by Edward Goldwyn, who made a Horizon documentary on racism around a similar group encounter. In this case, the

programme explores the fears, feelings and prejudices of the eight participants, dispels some myths and suggests how to live with the virus whether you are carrying it yourself or sharing a house with a carrier.

However, like "Are You A Racist?", Goldwyn's film also implies how difficult it is to change attitudes, and this is the crucial problem in dealing with Aids as a public health emergency. "City in Crisis" (January 15) goes to New York where it is estimated that one person in 15 is infected. There are interviews with inmates in Riker's Island jail, with two drug addicts in the Bronx and with an Aids sufferer who has watched his lover die of the disease. The situation in the United States is later contrasted with that in Africa (February 5), in a film made with the cautious co-operation of governments in Zambia and Uganda where there has been resentment of earlier television treatment of the crisis.

A programme on the threat in this country, especially to homosexuals (January 22) and another on policies for control, from voluntary to coercive (January 29), complete this series of interim reports. AIDS Now surveys a grim battlefield. Cunningly, the virus has chosen to propagate itself through a basic human drive involving the most intimate of acts: is there any way to contain it without infringement of individual rights? At the moment, the only hope is through persuasion, and television, as our chief medium of information and propaganda, is one of the places where that hope rests. It is not easy, on the whole, to feel optimistic about Aids.

Robin Buss

The winners of the National Poetry Competition were announced at the Poetry Society last Friday. The first prize of £2,000 went to Ian Duhig for his poem "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen"; second prize of £1,000 to Michael Donaghy; and the third prize of £500 to Harry Smart. There were fifteen smaller awards.

The prizes were presented by Richard Luce, the Minister for the

## ARTS



Competition No 102, Report by Seylla. Hymn to the Nativity. This was a popular competition and all but a few of you found the technical problems of following Milton's metre and rhyme simple to follow (remembering perhaps that even he dropped or added the odd syllable here and there). Fairly predictably there were two or three stanzas devoted to 1987's Bad News, with the last applauding the Goid; predictably too, you found bad tidings easier to write about than the good. Alanna Blake cleverly avoided this pitfall. Prince Stanley faced the problem four-square as did D A Hazel. Two of whose stanzas are printed below. Arnold Kellett wrote two very good first stanzas and in case he is shown to be pessimistic, I must point out that in his third he predicted that we shall "transcend" / This pagan-Christian blend". E J Elwin is highly commended. £5 for each stanza printed plus £5 extra to Alanna Blake as outright winner. A Happy Christmas to all competitors. We look forward to your 1988 entries.

## Apologia

This is the month and soon 'twill be the morn On which some years ago, one Christmas Day his son made up his mind he would be born. So when, inspired by Milton, I must say What I feel now, maternal thoughts betray My sentimental side, not often viewed In competition entries where my verse is crude.

## The Hymn

In nineteen eighty seven A visitant from Heaven Would find man's values strangely overturned: Stars in the void above Signify not love. And millions starve while surplus crops are burned. Elected leaders play at gods And beat their subjects' backs with self constructed rods.

On this divided Earth If there's another Birth How will the Lord decide colour or gender? In what symbolic place Belonging to what race Will a Messiah bring his peace for tender? He ought to leave us to our fate And populate more planets from this starting date

Shining Christ's natal day I have a son whose play In soul group moves the spirits of the young. He strums a bass guitar And backs an earthy star; Their hymns rise up in crude and modern tongue. But I believe the modern tongue.

Alanna Blake

Competition No 104, Set by Charyvots. The Slough Observer is publishing a slim volume of verse, *In Praise of Slough*, to counter John Betjeman's well-known hymn of hate. One contribution (from the alternative poet, Atilla the Stockbroker) begins: "Oh, self-made, independent (town) the jewel in Margaret's southern crown! No more will poets put you down". Please supply up to 16 lines of verse, extolling some other city/town/region/country that has been - or could be - derided by those seeking only the superficially picturesque. No need to keep to the Betjeman model - your verse can be in either your own voice or that of any well-known poet, alive or dead. Closing date: January 8.



"A Man kneels before Woman in the Courtyard of a Renaissance Palace" by Hendrick van Steenwyck the Younger c1610. From Flemish Paintings by Christopher Brown in the National Gallery Schools of Painting series which offers a general reader an illustrated guide (50 colour plates in each volume) to all the principal schools represented in the gallery.

## Radio Chef special

Radio Chef was an extraordinary mixture of blatant pornography (to attract German troops) and misinformation. Apparently loyal to Hitler, its presenter (known as Der Chef) could be obscenely critical of individuals such as Hess, as he set about undermining the Germans' own propaganda. Der Chef met his own end when he was "shot" on air - the effect being marred when an engineer accidentally played the same recorded dramatization a second time. OSI was replaced by Soldaten-Sonder Calais which purported to come from the German front line. In style it

was years ahead of its time. It transmitted a stream of pop for Tanzi music interrupted only by brief news stories. Apparently true, the latter contained subtle instructions on such matters as how to get yourself discharged from the army or navy.

Full marks to Chiltern for making the programme at a time when many IR stations are cutting back on their speech content and when all are being cooped subject even more to market place economics. Meanwhile, those who feel that they might want to teach and testing modern language across the ability range can get a current output to northern Europe. BBC 648 lacks together various translations between 0445-0700 and 1745-2000 to provide a trilingual service, *quelquefois en français, quelquefois en allemand* and with *chansons en Deutsch* and with *chansons en English*, interesting listening, it is on 648kHz (463 medium wave).

David Sol

When every day we talk of bomb or gun? How speak of heavenly love. The gift of God above. When cops and robbers on TV are fun? When murder makes a holiday. Then, "Love Thy Neighbour," seems a foolish thing to say.

Yet hope still springs anew. Whatever men may do. And good can conquer every kind of ill: For nothing can efface. This living fount of grace. And Christmas is the children's Christmas still. As year by year the tale is told. That ends with Kings, and myrrh, and frankincense, and gold.

Hazel Stanley

If you believe TV This season's jollity Is fuelled by commerce and the ad-men's greed: Spend, spend the advertiser cry. Pleasure is what you buy. Let whisky drown your spiritual need: A grasping season when all loot For tawdry gifts is one long trivial pursuit.

But look beyond the screen. Beyond the tinselled dream, Behind the glittering front the Media's made: Those articles ignore That call it all a chore The 'Christmas Count-Down' or 'The Cook's Parade'. And seek the Christmas message - Peace. Where rat-race images and clangor cannot reach. D A Price

Hail, festival supreme. The pantomime scheme Of ancient winter-solstice pagan rites. The Saturnalian kiss. The Bacchanalian bliss Of drowsy days and bright, carousing nights! And can this brash and earth-bound thing Proclaim old Milton's infant God and heavenly King?

The Jesus jamboree. Messiah's spending spree - Thou, Milton, shouldst be living at this hour! The self-indulgent zeal. The wealth that will not feel The pain of hungry millions who'd devour Our very Christmas scraps and crumbs. While telly kindly screens from sight their alien slums. Arnold Kellett

## True gold

Face to be Seen. Onklands Youth Theatre, Southampton.

Face to be Seen uses narrative, drama and music to trace the true life story of Graham Salmon, from his loss of sight at the age of two, via various schools for the blind and a frustrating search for employment, to this triumphant emergence as a world-reconquering international athlete. It's a remarkable and profoundly moving story of courage and determination, the inspirational essence of which is well captured in a script devised by Mark Wheeler. It abounds with humour and humanity, while steadfastly avoiding all hint of sentimentality.

The undoubted stars of Onklands Youth Theatre's production are the two vocalists, Herminia Rodrigues and Loretta. Power, who exploit Brian Price's excellent musical score with a confidence and authority that belies their youth. Sadly, though, the actors prove less well equipped to do justice to what is by any standards a very ambitious project. There's an engaging performance by Chris Vaudin as "Hill" Graham, but Deborah Bait and Neil Parker, as Graham's parents, lack the range of poise to convey the emotional intensity of the early part of the story. And too many of the supporting players trample over significant aspects of the text by speaking rather than acting their lines.

The show comes to life when Jason Eames takes over the central role. Shortly before the interval, he Eames is unable to sustain his performance, and by faltering in the latter stages he robs the climax of the piece of at least some of its potential impact. Deanne McAteer is the one member of the company who possesses natural stage presence, which she uses to considerable effect in the role of Marie, Salmon's wife. As a director, Mark Wheeler comes up with some imaginative "production" ideas, but he needs to devote more time to schooling his enthusiastic young cast in basic techniques. If *Face to be Seen* is to achieve the dramatic power that the documentary material so obviously demands.

Mick Martin

## Lighting up time

Little Dorrit (U) Curzon West End

When British cinema tires of present realities, it slips into some dim-lit corner of the past. The motive is political. History is not seen as a clue to understanding the present, but as a refuge here, the timeless themes of love and death unfold in a social and political context that can be taken entirely for granted. We have films set in the thirties which are about cars and costumes, films set in the Forties which are about childhood and adolescence. One set in the depression, war and colonialism are painted on to the set. This year, two British films have broken the rules. The first was Bill Douglas's *Comrades*, the second is *Little Dorrit*. Both are exceptional not

only in their treatment of history, but also in length: the two parts of *Little Dorrit* last six hours. This disregard for the convention that decrees a 90-minute norm for feature films and assumes that an audience will find anything more than 120 intolerable, is not wilful eccentricity. Like Bill Douglas, Christine Edwards has something to say and it takes more than an hour-and-a-half to say it.

To begin with, she needs to cover the ground twice. As a love story, the relationship of Arthur Clennam and Little Dorrit involves two points of view as well as two people, and the difference between them is a moral one. Clennam (Derek Jacobi) returns to England after 20 years managing his father's business in China. Benevolent and enterprising, he finds that his efforts are smothered by bureaucracy and his speculations end in disaster.

He concludes, in the title of Part One, that it is "Nobody's Fault" and this first film ends with him confronting Amy Dorrit (Sarah Pickering) in the Marshalsea Prison, with a look that is both a declaration of love and an expression of despair.

Part Two, "Little Dorrit's Story", reverses the premise of "Nobody's Fault". It is, she says, "everybody's fault" and this acknowledgement that it is possible to attribute blame is an affirmation of hope. The things that people have done wrong, they can put right: what is needed is a change of heart. And Little Dorrit's version of events does indeed show a subtle change of heart in its perception of the characters, most of all the dominating personality of William Dorrit (Alec Guinness), the tragicomic "Father of the Marshalsea". Neither Arthur nor Amy has any illusions about him, but

he is seen by Arthur as an object of benevolence, by his daughter as an object of love.

This intimate story takes its meaning from the background of Victorian London against which it is played out: the Marshalsea Prison, Bleeding Heart Yard, the insensitive bureaucracy of the Circumlocution Office and the worlds of business enterprise and financial speculation. The attention to detail has nothing to do with style and the characters are fully realized, played by an exceptional cast. Joined by Jacob and Pickering are joined by Roshan Seth, Joan Greenwood, Max Wall, Cyril Cusack, Bill Fraser, Eleanor Bron, Michael Elphick, Robert Morley, Patricia Hayes and Miriam Margolyes in a gallery of outstanding performances, each contributing to the rounded image of a society set in a particular historical

moment, whatever the underlying parallels with our own time.

*Little Dorrit* is a delight and an education. The photography, the use of Verdi's music to emphasize particular moments in the story, the sets, the costumes, the acting, are guided by an intelligent and faithful to Dickens's vision (though without the melodrama), though the two parts can, and should, be seen in order on consecutive evenings, and nobody over the age of 14 is likely to find them too long.

Robin Buss

A study guide to the film by Ian Wall is available from Film Education, 37-39 Oxford Street, London W1R 0RE. Above left: Sarah Pickering as Little Dorrit; centre: Patricia Hayes as Amy Dorrit; right: Alec Guinness as William Dorrit.

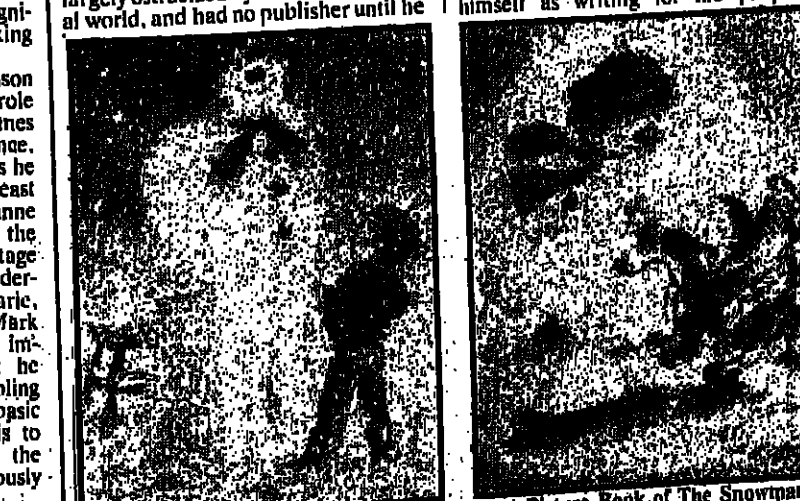
## Snowman

Philippa Davidson talks to composer Howard Blake

signed with Faber in 1983. You will look in vain for Blake's name in any edition of New Music and only last year did he receive his first Arts Council subsidy, 30 years after starting in the music business.

Nevertheless the Work Book now shows an increasing number of red entries, red being the colour Blake uses for his serious compositions, which include a Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra written for Theo King, and a large scale choral work, *Benedictus*, performed at the Three Choirs Festival and scheduled for five major cathedral performances in 1988.

Blake's true patron is without doubt the commercial world, which he strongly defends. Take the Mother-care commercial, he argues. Where else would you be given the opportunity to write for eight hours? The great composers of the past - Bach, Handel, Mozart - were commercial composers. Following in their tradition Blake sees himself as writing for the people.



Illustrations from the Easy Piano Picture Book of The Snowman, published by Faber (£6.95).

## Carolling

Kings College School Christmas Carol Concert. Queen Elizabeth Hall, December 8.

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without that ethereal solo at the beginning of "Once In Royal..." The trebles of Kings College School, however, seemed as at home with Mike Batt's "Bright Eyes" and Pau Simon's "Bridge over Troubled Water" as the old favourites.

I was less impressed by the full choir. Though their sound could hardly be faulted they seemed to lack a sense of performance, with very few heads raised from copies. Communication with the audience would in any case have been impossible for many of the smaller boys, masked as they were by their taller classmates.

A pity, because musically-speaking, KCS has no reason to hang its head. Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* loses something in its sparser version for organ and cello, despite being enriched on this occasion by Alan Opie as solo baritone and one of the school's star cellists, Matthew Clark. "Merry Little Christmas", a medley of Christmas songs in lighter vein, didn't always swing quite as it should, but then it is a surprisingly complex piece requiring at one point two four-part choirs to sing the line song and "Deck the Hall" against each other.

In Rutter's "Dancing Day" the choir was joined by harpist Lucy Wakeford, whose exquisite playing added yet another dimension to a well-balanced and varied programme. It is difficult to imagine where choirs would be without the prolific energy of John Rutter, both in his creative writing for voices and instruments, and his inventive arrangements of carols like "The Twelve Days of Christmas".

School instrumentalists, Julian Cowling (cello), Nicholas Cartledge (flute) and Christopher Skalski (piano) played, with an excellent sense of ensemble, in Weber's Scherzo, and Schiffrisklage from the Trio in G minor. There was much to enjoy here. Better direction and more attention to presentation would have sent us all home awestruck.

PD



## ARTS

## That's entertainment

A choice of children's theatre by Ann McFerran

The West End's first black Cinderella charms an American rock star at the Shaw: the Pied Piper leads hundreds of ILEA schoolchildren to a mountain paradise at the National; a punkish fairy helps Jack find a really huge giant up the hemlock at the Half Moon, while the Burbank stage is transformed into Munchkin-land in *The Wizard of Oz*. For the Christmas season it is as if London children had their very own fairy godmother, for theatre is seemingly magicked into a fairytale world, where subsidised and commercial theatres vie with each other to entertain children.

But as the shows proliferate annually so it becomes all important to make the right choice for the family outing. Beware, for all that glitters in neon lights is not sure proof entertainment: commercial managements proffering shows based on TV characters like Postman Pat or Sooty, and adaptations of classic children's stories like *Winnie the Pooh* or the *Hobbit* are often poorly conceived, inferior affairs that may put a child off theatre for life. Indeed, it is often both safer and cheaper to stay with subsidised theatre for theatrical excellence.

Local community theatres like the Shaw, the Half Moon or Stratford East are producing panto guaranteed free of telly-speak and smutty-joke-telling dainties. Both the Shaw's *Cinderella* and Stratford East's *Beauty and the Beast* are exuberant, fast-moving shows which remain faithful to the original fairytale.

The Shaw's *Cinderella* stars American singer Suzi Quatro and Beajay, the West End's first black Cinderella. They make a somewhat odd, although charming couple in a show which opens bizarrely in that quintessentially English scenario, the fox-hunting scene. However, this affords director Ben Benison the opportunity to return to the original story when the disguised

inventor. This East End Jack looks as though he has stepped from the pages of the *Beano*, the Baron looks like a stand-in for Dracula, while the punkish fairy appears to have found her costume at the local street market. Both Misson's tale takes many unorthodox twists and turns (be warned, the show is rather too strong on audience participation) on its way to a magnificent climax at the top of the bean stalk where we confront a really enormous puppet Giant Grumblebum. His entrance frightened some of the little kids, but it held a fairly demanding school audience aged with frisson-filled appreciation. Really good, they murmured as the Giant boomed his Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum and only just cleared the rafters of the Half Moon.

London's permanent children's theatres are presenting shows tailor-made for younger children. At the Unicorn, *Jacob Two-Two Meets The Hooded Fang*, a modern Gothic children's fantasy, relates the story of a little boy who says everything twice because he's the youngest of a big family. Somewhat long on plot and short on laughs, the show nevertheless boasts picture book settings and an irresistible small hero who finally saves the day when he unmasks the dreaded Hooded Fang.

By contrast, Wimbledon's Polka theatre returns to the ancient wonder of the Arabian Nights when director Richard Gill recreates an exotic saga in which a simple beggar boy discovers a threadbare magic carpet which can transform pussies into life-size creatures, save the imprisoned Princess and save the people of Baghdad from penury. Director Richard Gill's overweening enthusiasm to provide something for all the family is sometimes stylistically confusing, but there's always a splendid *coup de theatre*, like the magicking of the pussies, to remind us that this is the season of good will.

enjoy St George's highly visual *Oscar in the Underworld*, a panto about a boy who does a Faustian deal with a Noo-Coward-style devil all for the sake of a home computer. What has become of Father Christmas?

Next week Ann McFerran reviews plays and musicals for older children, including *The Wizard of Oz* at the Barbican, *The Pied Piper* at the National and *Life of the Lyric*.

Piglette supplies the romantic interest in *Fat Pig: The Musical*

## House full

Timothy Ramsden on Leicester Haymarket Theatre's young ideas

It is an irony that just as the national curriculum seems about to squeeze drama teaching in schools, the 20-year-old expansion of the subject in higher education is providing new energy for mainstream theatre.

Peter Lichtenfels came across theatre while at university, switched to a drama course and now, after a varied and successful career, has taken over the post of director at Leicester's Haymarket Theatre. He inherits a 700-seater main house chiefly known as the originator of West End musical productions (*Me and My Girl*) and an upstairs studio with a recent tradition of lively small-scale classical productions from Sophocles to Ionesco.

There is, though, a danger that the country's repertoires can settle into a gracious yet staid middle-age, as much a reflection of their time as the ex-

aspect, aimed at filling theatre seats and creating a new audience for the future. Schools are also, Lichtenfels explains, a way of contacting all cultural and ethnic groups (the city has a sizeable Asian population in particular) on equal ground.

He stresses that the concept of Theatre is central to the Haymarket's educational programme, not drama as social work or therapy. A range of workshops is being set up, both in schools and at the theatre, to develop performance and technical skills. Keith Boak's emphasis is the same. Unlike the open-entry Saturday morning Haymarketers, his Youth Theatre company will be auditioned and will look for a small cast of individual talents to work on established scripts, though there is a significant local emphasis in the opening production, set for March 1988, of two one-acters.

looking era that followed *Look Back in Anger*.

Part of Mr Lichtenfels' prescription to keep the theatre's life-blood circulating is a definite educational policy which ranges from plans for a more informal and welcoming foyer layout to the appointment of Mahendra Solanki as arts and educational development associate and Keith Boak as staff director charged with setting up a new youth theatre.

Such a policy has its hard-nosed side. Solanki is the theatre's contact for teachers and lecturers. He has been contacting the county's schools - and would be pleased to hear from teachers who have not heard from him. He stresses the importance of staff selection: "We should not be taking on people who are not committed to the theatre. Autumn at the Haymarket has

tended to the sophisticated end of the scale with more for sixth formers and older students than for the younger. September's production of a lesser-known Tennessee Williams, *Summer and Smoke*, set standards of production, design and music (composer Gavin Bryars is the Haymarket's Music Adviser) to stimulate ideas for GCSE Drama and beyond, while the theatrical hair was let at least half-down for a Thirties American furore, *Room Service*. Quite how funny this humour is for a post-Young Ones and Saturday Night Live generation is uncertain, but the production had an immediacy gained through the intelligent casting of fine youngish actors, including the ever-fizzing Gavin Bryars (whose production of *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* made British audiences friends with Fo).

In the studio, *The Traveller* told of a composer's experience of coming to terms with a stroke, illuminated by David Threlfall's energetic, nervy central performance, while a new play, *Long to Rain Over Us*, set in World War II Leicestershire, turned out to be a hard-edged political parable in the style of Howard Barker.

Younger audiences are now being entertained by an ecology-conscious show *Fat Pig: The Musical*. Our hero has to slum down to make himself more attractive to his singer-girlfriend Piglette (recently starring in "Piglette"), which is Verdi-ing on the ridiculous and less attractive to the butcher. Dietary advice which should stop the youthful audience mid-Star bar is confounded by the finale where Piglette is put off again without a snort from Piglette while thoughts of saving his bacon are put off till another day.

Around this pair is a farmyard of animals, including some cuddly embraceable ewes. "We're the animals: Please don't eat us" goes the vegetarian finale. Alas, if no one did, there would soon be no delightful farmyard for them to sing their pleasant songs in, either.

Young minds like strong narratives. This is known to every parent who has told a bedtime story, but escapes the creators of *Fat Pig*, whose credits include *Barnum* and *42nd Street*. Most

of the costumes and masks. After the interval the pace heats up and the last ten minutes introduces a display of juggling, acrobatics and a still-walking crow (Richard Gauntlett).

*Fat Pig: The Musical* runs at Leicester Haymarket Theatre until January 31. Box Office: (0533) 539797. The *Traveller* is at the Almeida Theatre until January 9. Box office: 01-359 4404.



## January exhibitions

Whether you have been watching the approaches to disarmament by the superpowers with hope or cynicism, studying images of other cultures and reflecting upon their history offers real lessons in survival and co-existence.

The *Living Arctic: Hunters of the Canadian North* has just opened at the Museum of Mankind in London and will run until April 1989. As befits an exhibition sponsored by Indigenous Survival International, it is permeated with the poetic and passionate self-affirmation of the Inuit, Dene and Algonquin peoples. Though soundtracks of the howling Arctic winds echo around the show, it is the human image, the hunter trapping a seal, the mother carrying her baby on her back, which the exhibition emphasises - and dismisses a few myths in the process.

Hunting and meat, for instance, raw meat is a completely sufficient human diet, especially if it is largely seal. Arctic culture is not a starvation culture of fear and insecurity. Rather the hunter who stalks his prey for days rejoices in his skill and mounts the animal's death. He is careful not to kill too many: animals are his "bank". He celebrates their bones in carvings, sings about their power, makes stories about their importance. Their skins provide the best clothing and boots. Most of all, hunting is also a spiritual activity.

Commemorably, *The Living Arctic* is not antiquarian. It shows not only the famous snow-house of the Inuit, but also modern, centrally-heated, frame house, with built-in television, comics and computer. The clothes are still kept outside in the cold, to keep them from rotting in the humidity.

At least, that's how it could, and should be. Instead, all too many children have been whisked in, around and out, keeping within their "half-an-hour for the Minister, and 46.062 (36 per cent) were in parties that had not booked.

With so few teachers booking their visits in advance, Sister Catherine, the Minister's education officer, has been unable to organize as much as she would like to give. As the Centre for School Visits has been opened specifically for that purpose, she hopes that it will be an incentive for teachers to plan thoroughly and an opportunity for children to learn more about the Minister in less awesome surroundings.

Sister Catherine believes that it is a wasted opportunity not to prepare carefully for a visit, a view that she must share with education officers the world over. But she also maintains the wider possibilities of visiting the Minister. "It is sad that we do not see very many groups of secondary school children," she said. "They might come in the lower forms, or for specialist interests in the sixth form, but hardly ever do we see the middle years."

"I do know the pressures of time in those exam years, but I feel that we can offer people have pinned down British culture to accurately as the authors of *Mass Observation*, Humphrey Jennings and Humphrey Spender ("Lensman") are both the subjects of exhibitions at the Bradford Museum of Photography Film and Television (tel: 0274-727488). Humphrey Jennings is film-maker and Humphrey Spender is the "unobserved observer" of everyday life crystallized many images from the thirties and forties. On until February 14, 1988. Admission free.

If you would like any activity at your museum featured in this column please write to: Victoria Neumark, Resources Section, The TES, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The next column will appear at the end of January.

Victoria Neumark

## RESOURCES



## Raising the joists

Sarah Farley visits York Minster's new centre for schools

Displayed on the wall of the new Centre for School Visits at York Minster is a scale

offer valuable help for GCSE courses. For example, a group taking GCSE Environmental Studies came here re-

The courtyard, where packed lunches can be eaten in summer, will display artefacts and pieces of masonry

avenues of investigation, on various levels of ability. Sister Catherine is keen that the show have as much detail as possible about the building's history, which has constructed a booking form that usually gives her the details she wants.

of school children. Within the walls they have placed a plan of their local church and of their school hall, both of which had seemed immense until they set foot inside the gigantic Minster.

The atmosphere is as overwhelming as the size. There are strange echoes, unfamiliar architecture, peculiar light and shade; there is the ineffable sense of history that when combined with a place of worship provokes a powerful and memorable experience.

At least, that's how it could, and should be. Instead, all too many children have been whisked in, around and out, keeping within their "half-an-hour for the Minister, and 46.062 (36 per cent) were in parties that had not booked.

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"I do know the pressures of time in those exam years, but I feel that we can

materials and shapes that are normally out of reach. Some exhibits will have an historical story to tell, while others will demonstrate different architectural styles.

The courtyard is not yet finished, but will be complete for the summer. Meanwhile, Sister Catherine debates on what would make the best exhibits: "Someone suggested a medieval saw pit, a huge pit where the workmen rested the timbers while sawing through them, but although exciting, I think it would be rather too dangerous."

Contained within the Centre is a variety of objects and resources that can be adapted for the age, number and interests of the children involved. There is a video introduction to the Minster, recordings of Minster music and commentaries by people who work there (three Sony Walkmans are available too). There is a fascinating model of medieval builders at work on the Minster showing, among other things, how the joists were raised, and the model really does inspire children with understanding of the difficulties builders faced in 1400.

The worksheets and booklets produced by the Minster cover its history and building: Anglo-Saxon saints, stained glass, Gothic architecture, heraldry, and St William of York. They cost from 35p to £2, and are available by mail order in advance of the visit. There are also charts and pictures for the children to examine, and samples of wood, glass, stone and fabric which they can handle.

As the Minster provides so many

Up to 40 pupils can come in a group, with one teacher to every 10 pupils. The cost is 40p per pupil on a half-day visit, 20p per pupil for one hour. Teachers are admitted free of charge. A minimum of 10 days' notice is needed and telephone bookings are not accepted. Further information and booking forms are available by writing (enclosing a sae) to the Education Officer, Centre for School Visits, St William's College, 6 College Street, York YO1 2JF (tel: 0904-61124).

A fascinating model of medieval builders at work on the Minster shows how the joists were raised, timber was split, and stained glass blown on site.

"I want to know if they are bright 15-year-olds or average seven-year-olds; are they studying something specific, such as medieval life, or are they visiting all the York museums in one swoop?"

Through such information, I can establish exactly what to organize for that school's visit, suggesting worksheets, and providing guides and speakers. Sometimes the subject of the visit is quite specialized and now we even exhibit items of historical interest that are not normally seen by the public, or at least showing pictures of them. I do try to make the visit as personal as possible. I always try to meet the group, and other Minster staff will be on hand as well. The Centre has its own receptionist to help with arrivals, bookings and teachers calling in for resource material."

Up to 40 pupils can come in a group, with one teacher to every 10 pupils. The cost is 40p per pupil on a half-day visit, 20p per pupil for one hour. Teachers are admitted free of charge. A minimum of 10 days' notice is needed and telephone bookings are not accepted. Further information and booking forms are available by writing (enclosing a sae) to the Education Officer, Centre for School Visits, St William's College, 6 College Street, York YO1 2JF (tel: 0904-61124).

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## Puppet show

Twenty Years of Cannon Hill Puppet Theatre Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

Entering the Midlands Arts Centre's Cotton Gallery just now is rather like plunging into the dream world of the Nutcracker: puppet characters of many shapes and sizes line the walls, stand in corners, smile down on you from ledges. Presiding over this international cast from stories all over the world is that doyen of the European puppet theatre, Mr Punch and his wife Judy, grinning at you, eye to eye, over the edge of their tall, striped booth.

Over 400 characters, created and designed by John Blundell for his children's theatre productions at the MAC over the last 20 years, have been brought together in this exhibition, complemented by his original sketches and paintings for the characters, their costumes and stage settings.

The immediate effect is breathtaking in its colour and vivacity, and then there's the pleasure of discovering the variety of materials and styles of puppetry which have been used. The austere, wooden faces and long heavy limbs for the tall (3-inch) stick figures in the Celtic-inspired *"The Quest for Olwen"*, seem to look down their long, aquiline noses at the gaudy jewels, diaphanous gowns and exotically painted faces of the equally tall Indian ladies in *"The Pomegranate Princess"*. Diminutive, (1 inch high) puppets made of wood and stick operated from *Cinderella*, have a charming,



Rod and string puppets from the Indian folk tale "The Pomegranate Princess", one group from over 400 puppet characters on show at the Midlands Arts Centre

too discursive for such a young audience, but Act II delivers more excitement with the appearance of the ogre who can turn himself into any shape - a boast he proceeds to fulfil.

Under Simon Palmer's direction the actors achieve some attractive characterizations in their voices. Hans (Phil Knowles) is honest and kind, his faithful cat (Malcolm Robinson) a Jeeves-like master's valet, and Lynn Robertson-Hay is gentle as Princess Rose Petal.

Ann FitzGerald

The exhibition is on view until January 4 and *Puss in Boots* runs until February 4.

## In step

By portraying emotions through movement that cannot be expressed in words, dance gives new perspective to traditional plays. Its ability to evoke a mystical, almost other-worldly atmosphere was conveyed by Bishop of Hereford Bluesteel School where dance was used as a means of illustrating the biblical creation and Christmas stories.

Rehearsals for *God Is Alive - Magic Is Afoot* began in September, when 50 fourth and fifth form drama students got together on weekends to improvise dance sequences. These were subsequently cohesively choreographed into a 1½ hour performance by the school's head of drama, Graham Hale. The project was linked to the pupils' drama course work, and both their contribution to the choreography and their final performances will count towards their GCSE assessment.

Graham Hale was delighted that the experience had changed many of the

pupils' attitudes to dance and, while watching the evocative production, it was difficult to imagine that this was the students' first introduction to movement.

The production began in a primordial twilight world before the dawn of light. Dancers lay huddled on the floor beneath a glistening net, with only the flickering of a few fingers and arms to imply the power about to break forth. Gradually, out of the darkness, groups of dancers emerged to personify the creation of light, the elements, animals and man. Act two moved from the Garden of Eden to the stable in Bethlehem and here, movement was supported by musketeer actors' narration.

Throughout, movement and music (ranging from Vivaldi to Andrew Lloyd Webber) were well matched. The silver set (made from strings of foil and donated by the local dairy who use them for milk bottle tops) added a timeless quality, and the performance was a highly imaginative version of the biblical tales.

Iola Smith

## Bonded

The Sea, by Edward Bond. Billborough Sixth Form College, Nottingham.

*The Sea* has been around since 1973. It can hardly be classed as new writing, but I've never seen it on the stage. Bond's writing is less neglected by the professional theatre than Billborough College are to be congratulated on the choice as well as the quality of their production.

It is an adventurous choice for a sixth form college. The play mixes farce and tragedy, and the young cast provide the mature and intelligent performances it requires. The tale of the mad draper who suspects that each shipwreck is really an invasion from outer space, is hard enough to sustain. Bond also mixes in an absurdly domineering widow, a wise old man, the sea, and a comic character to name a few. The cast enjoy the comedy elements, but they also convey the menace without which the play would overbalance entirely.

Nick Wood



# Alpha beta



## Mike Picciotto and Ian Robertson on interactive video for foreign language students

**Jacquetta Megarry**

Between the potential and its practical achievement, however, there is a difficult road to follow. The almost complete lack of active-play videodiscs suitable for language learning, the difficulty of finding authoring software capable of the speed, power and precision required and the cost of the technology all combine to prevent the realisation of this potential.

The North West Educational Computing Project was a research and development project whose brief was to investigate the potential of interactive video in foreign language learning in secondary schools. The main collaborating partners were IBM UK Ltd, Lancashire Polytechnic and the University of Manchester. The full-time project team consisted of a co-ordinator, language specialists and computer specialist working at Lancashire Polytechnic.

The project also had support from four education authorities in the north-west - Lancashire, Manchester, Stockport and Tameside, each one of which had designated a project school. These schools then received interactive video workstations and the project co-ordinator.

the amateur status of the participants and the speed of shooting, the dialogues have been hailed almost universally by interested groups as lively, fresh, amusing and packed with transactional language of great value. Unlike most other foreign texts specifically for learning purposes, the dialogues are spoken at full natural speed.

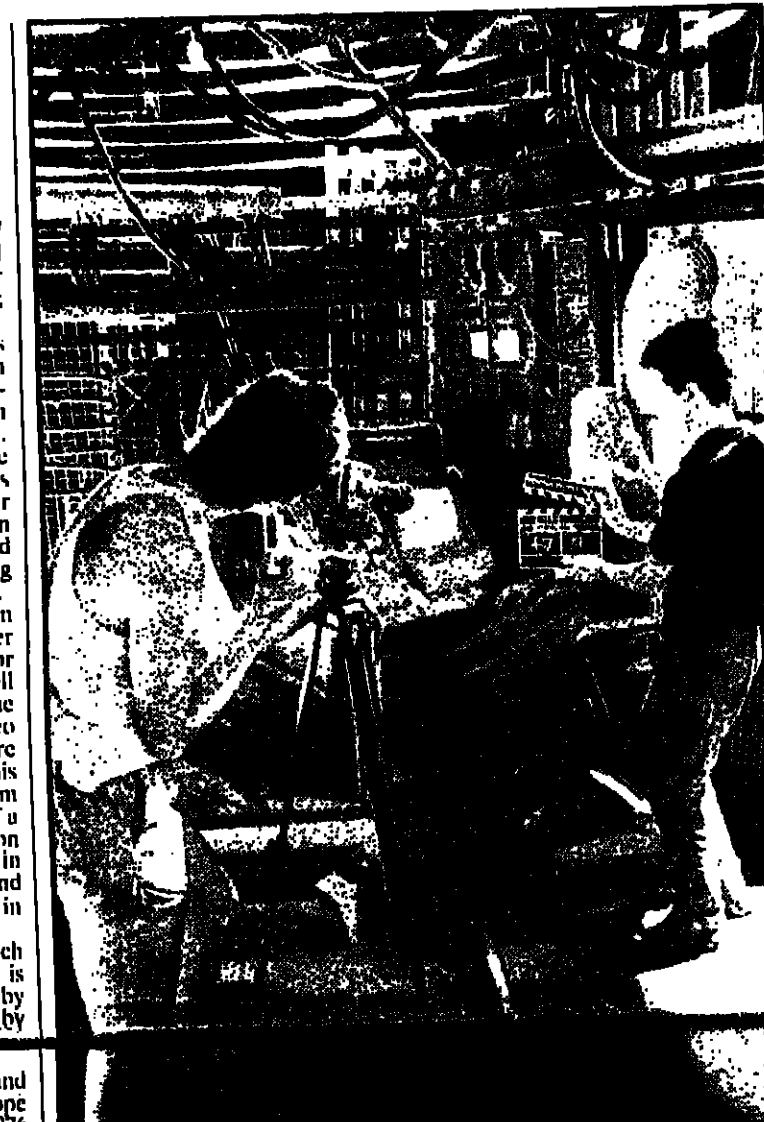
It must be stressed that all the work offered is oral and in the foreign language. There is no input of text from the keyboard which is used purely as a control device. The control is in the hands of the user, not under the hands, and first-time users in project schools tend not to look at them after a very few minutes.

Learners are offered a choice of viewing, printing or activities. Viewing allows work with the dialogue in a variety of ways: with or without audio, with or without subtitles, with English subtitles, without subtitles or neither. In an unpaused viewing, the dialogue plays to the end of the chosen combination of titles and sound. In a paused viewing, it is segmented into utterances. At the end of each one, the videodisc goes into still frame, leaving the speaker in an

This package is astonishingly cheap considering its comprehensiveness and ease of use. It will be of excellent service to all sectors from primary schools with project databases through to heavy administrative use.

Can

**This week the BBC will screen the best entries for the Showreel 87 awards for young film makers. Nick Baker talked to the judges**



A note of commiseration from the cinematographer-panelist (Killing Fields, Emancipation) says his first film was worse than most. Showreel '87 that he

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# OFF AIR

## Information highways

communications network, which worked well for its original purposes but is now buckling under the strain of carrying commercial information services and products. Thus TINS, Prestel, and Nervis offer information on the same lines as our conversations with friends and family. Neither Bell nor Baird could have imagined that we would juxtapose electronic data transmission and people talking to each other — nor did they realize that we would want to integrate all these

First, we need educators who have good ideas; beyond today's classroom walls, for connecting children, ideas and people. Imagine a network that would respond to your individual demands — a tailored information system that did not have to be pre-structured according to the designer's whims but could be organized to suit what you want, as you want it, with materials, ideas, information, debates, and guidance available for you and each

The barriers to such decisions are both technical and legal - people have to agree to their information being moved around, the carriers have to agree to interconnections between their individual networks, the suppliers have to agree to fund the developments and see that financial returns are possible.

**Ann Irving**

**'You can learn to be intelligent — we got through!'**

dry and tired subjects: the TV comprehensive education, the examination system included.

Those whose schooling began '50s will certainly experience a touch of recognition when Tom O'Connor

**4 If you were a grammar school boy you definitely didn't go down the**

There is discontent from the

**4 We all knew that  
secondary modern  
second best**

ROSE

There is a dearth of real experience in the education diet offered by media and this may go some way to correct the deficiency.

**“The amount of time we spent worshipping – all C of E, of course, was amazing”**

Sir George Y

Quick Robin! Grab that stick then down to the Barnmobile! V get to Broadcasting House, be too late.

# The good old days?

**Carolyn O'Grady listens to views of the famous on education**

**“You can learn to be intelligent — we got them through!”**

4 If you were a grammar school boy you definitely wouldn't go down the p

4 We all knew the secondary modern second best

4 The amount of time we spent worshipping — all C of E, of course, was amazing!

Quick Robin! Grab that sign  
then down to the Barmobile! We  
get to Broadcasting House, be  
too late.

LONG : 411.10011 - 7/2/21



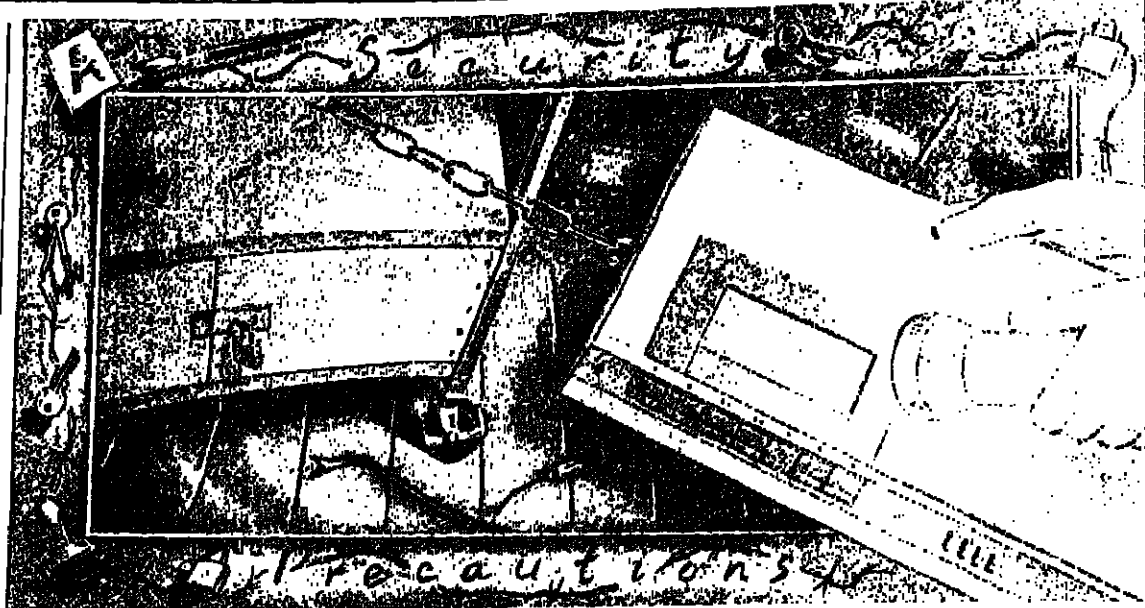
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Some things, like time and learning opportunities, are irreplaceable if they are lost. When a thief steals audio cassette recorders, GCSE students preparing for oral exams or using small recorders in their coursework, may lose essential study opportunities forever. In an infant school, children can lose some of their best thinking because writing is too slow and laborious to capture it, and they depend on talk-on-tape.

The most commonly stolen equipment at present is video recorders, and any VHS cassettes left out normally get taken as well. Losing recorded cassettes can be a disaster for teachers and pupils alike. New machines only cost money. Video and audio cassettes, which may contain hundreds of vital recordings, may not be replaceable at any price.

The things most at risk are machines and accessories that do not look out of place in ordinary homes, and the list lengthens as schools and colleges use more domestic makes and models. Some computers, for example, are getting more attractive to thieves because the same makes and models are being bought for use in schools, homes and small businesses. If your computer has a hard disc, think of all the software, data and pupils' work stored on it that might be lost - especially if you keep your box of back-up floppies in the same room and lose that too. Back-up discs, and masters of video and audio recordings, need special protection. It pays to invest the little time, trouble and money it takes to protect your most vulnerable equipment and software. Even if your i.e.a. replaces stolen equipment, and not all do, and even fewer do it quickly, you cannot afford to lose the other things that money cannot buy.

Thieves who sell their swag prefer to steal equipment when it is new and complete with packing and user guides. Excited children tell the whole neighbourhood about new purchases, the school may put them on view during a parents' evening, and the local newspaper might print a list of all the new equipment. Every thief has this ready-made intelligence network. The first rule is to use all this publicity to make sure that potential thieves also know in advance exactly why there is little to be gained from



## Stop thieves

Nelson Trowbridge offers teachers advice on how to make that equipment less tempting

burgling your school.

Make sure that no thief can steal boxes, packing and new-looking instruction books together with the equipment. Photocopy instruction books and keep the originals (boldly labelled) under lock and key. Get rid of boxes and packing, or if you need to keep them in case you have to return faulty machines to the supplier, store them far away and out of sight.

Without doubt, the most effective thief deterrent action, provided thieves know about it in advance, is to personalize your equipment so that it is not easily sold on. This can be done in several ways. First, use a coat of clear

varnish which made it impossible to remove.

The school name and/or postal code put on with large stencils can do the trick. Personalization must be obvious, even to a thief posing as a parent looking through the windows on a Sunday afternoon. Another idea is to paint the two sides and top of a TV or monitor with light-coloured, glass paint. Use a new brush, fresh paint and lots of care. Don't paint screw heads, and do not let paint drip through ventilation slots. Personalized equipment can look beautiful - we are not talking about painting a television set.

Identification marking, such as engraved names or the use of invisible marks that show under ultra violet light, serve a different purpose and are best regarded as a way to be added to equipment that has already been personalized. The i.e.a.'s supplies officer might even come to an agreement with suppliers on behalf of schools and colleges.

showing new purchases to children or parents. Personalization should have as much publicity as possible. If repairs are needed later, even during the guarantee period, a personalized case is no problem, especially if your i.e.a. buys lots of equipment from the supplier. The i.e.a.'s supplies officer might even come to an agreement with suppliers on behalf of schools and colleges.

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easily from a car boot in a poorly-lit car park, and the buyer only discovers the mark when he or she gets home. These marks enable the police to return stolen equipment to you if it is recovered. But by then you and your pupils have suffered major inconvenience and the equipment might have been damaged. It is better to prevent the theft.

Specially protected rooms are useful, but a great deal of a school's AV and computing equipment has to be deployed in scattered locations on the campus and cannot be moved to a special room at the end of each day. A very good compromise for local security is a theft-proof cabinet such as a Hurova. These are available in several sizes from Portoside Ltd (084-248721). A Hurova is particularly useful for storing master copies of video and audio recordings, and back-up computer discs, that could not be replaced if lost.

Video locking cabinets, which fit on school/industry types of TV trolleys give VCRs useful protection, and even cheap siren alarms can scare off inexperienced thieves. It is worthwhile, too, drawing the attention of children and parents to any equipment in the school that cannot be bought in shops - such as Comber or ECI Goodwell educational/industrial audio equipment. Anyone caught with this must have stolen it.

Depending on local regulations and the conditions of insurance cover, it is also worth remembering that during weekends and holiday periods valuable equipment is safer in teachers' homes than in school. Furthermore, taking equipment home in the winter can reduce maintenance costs by avoiding freezing conditions at night and the hazards of condensation when the caretaker turns on the heating again. While equipment is in your car, however, keep it out of sight and lock the car doors.

Professional thieves are not the biggest problem, sadly. It is very much more difficult to protect equipment from vandals whose intention is to smash as much as possible. Another special case is the video pirate who will photocopy or secretly mark, interconnect them to make multiple copies from stolen masters, and then abandon them before moving on. You can't win them all.

## ZIP to the zoo

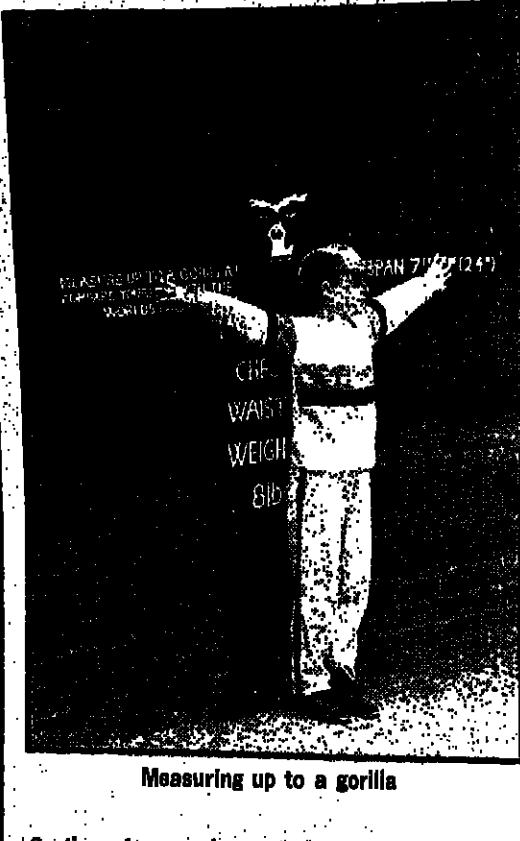
"Every zoo should have a ZIP Squad," says Malcolm Whitehead, director of education at Twycross Zoo, Twycross, on the borders of Leicestershire and Warwickshire. It is a zoo with a good reputation, 80,000 schoolchildren a year visit.

"But people used to rush through," he explains. "We wanted to slow them down, to make them look longer at the animals, and think."

It was not until Leicestershire County Council offered a Manpower Services Commission financial team that Malcolm was able to implement one of his ideas. The Zoo Interpretation Programme (ZIP) Squad is composed of young Community Programme artists, teachers and biologists. Already the squad, in less than two years, has successfully "slowed people down."

"Peek-a-zoo" were the squad's first creations. Viewing tubes, fitted with shoe-box theatre scenery, focus on outdoor enclosures where animals exercise and feed. Giraffes are seen framed in grassland vegetation; and gorillas are "peeked" at through groves of bamboo.

On the wide wall of the indoor Giraffe House is a 60-foot-long "hands-on" ZIP-painted mural. It depicts the wildlife of the African plains, and the strong working parts are manipulated with glee by visiting children. "Turn the savannah banner to make wildebeest emigrate." "Open the doors to see the inside of a termite's nest." "Turn the boards to make the giraffe drink."



Measuring up to a gorilla



Watch the giraffes

Outside the complex which is home to the Twycross western lowland gorilla is a life-size gorilla silhouette with its measurements plainly marked. Children stand up against it and measure themselves, comparing statistics. In the entrance are framed portraits of the occupants beside their family tree. Visitors pause to identify individuals: Joe, Mamie, Bonzo, Eva, Bloddy, and Asante, the latest baby.

Twycross is best known for its successful captive breeding of curious and attractive primates, endangered by habitat destruction in their native

rainforests. This destruction of rainforests is spelt out to children with the help of a boldly painted "conservation truck" (or "green machine"). It is a cart picturing rainforest scenes - but with little doors which open outwards to reveal surprises within. "The rainforest is a home; open a door and find out more," reads a caption on one side and, on the other: "The rainforest is home." Imported household objects made of mahogany or ebony, bottles of medicine and packets of sage, spices and cocoa, butterflies and

beetles; snake skins and bat droppings - each item has a message. "The most dangerous animal in the world," reads the door which opens to reveal - a mirror. The green machine has plenty of space for leaflets, handouts and information on British conservation issues, with names of societies to join. "Think global - act local."

The ZIP Squad's next venture is to create a miniature rainforest with fruit bats, tree shrews, insects, spiders and other jungle creatures. Education packs and programmes have been

given a refreshing facelift by the squad. Courses for teachers are a regular feature, and some 500 university students arrive each year to carry out behavioural studies. The new outdoor guide for the public is enlivened with squad graphics. "Hands-on" labels against enclosures again succeed in making people stop and think.

For further information write to Malcolm Whitehead, Twycross Zoo, Atherstone, Leicestershire. Ann Trowbridge

# For the best way of looking at education ...

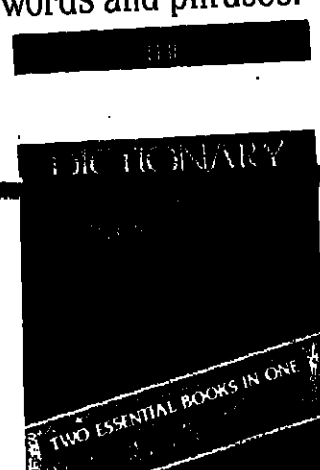
## 1. Read The Times Educational Supplement

The TES provides a weekly forum for every view. It gives you a round-up of the week's news which is more comprehensive than that of your national daily or Sunday newspaper. Long-term news stories are subjected to an overview in News Focus. Many a radical change of direction has started life as a view from a contributor to Platform and other views from our readers are reflected in detail in our Letters page.

Very importantly, the view that the TES has of itself has changed, as our concept of education has. The School to Work pages, the extended Primary teaching coverage and the special sections for school governors are a response to the varied needs of our ever-increasing number of readers. We still, of course, provide those essential in-depth reviews of books and school equipment, our weekly pull-out 'Extras' on subjects as far-ranging as Computers and Religious Studies - and the largest compilation of educational jobs of any newspaper in the world.

## 2. Acquire a copy of The Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus in One Volume.

This indispensable reference book offers you two ways of looking at education. You can either refer to the dictionary entry for meanings, spellings, pronunciation and usage or, on the same page, look at the Thesaurus entry for a wide range of substitutable words and phrases.



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## PERSONAL COLUMN

Several papers gave space last month to the latest piece of research derived from the National Child Development Study – a longitudinal study of people born in March 1958. This dealt with adult literacy and basic skills and showed that 13 per cent of the cohort, aged 23 when the field work was done, reported difficulties with reading, writing and numeracy. But it also noted that many had some competence in literacy and numeracy and warned that it is "inaccurate and pejorative" to refer to adults with these difficulties as illiterate.

This put *The Guardian* on its literate and numerate mettle. Its story was headlined, inevitably: "Illiterate six million only tip of the iceberg". This starkly encapsulated the very inaccuracy against which the report had warned, and compounded the error with faulty arithmetic. A leading article on the same day helpfully explained that 13 per cent, extrapolated, involved about six million in the workforce. This implies a workforce of nearly 50 million, a mere twice the true figure.

It would be unfair to make too much of this example. But it led me to keep an eye open for other errors in newspapers and elsewhere in the following days. I excluded plain misprints, and I almost resisted the temptation to quibble over stylistic niceties.

The errors were not hard to find. In the same week *The Guardian* had "connurbation" and "permissable". *The Times* managed "few inhabitants . . . whom would not benefit" and *The Guardian* again "the State Department . . . precipitously announced".

Last month I had a good word for the substance of the Education Reform Bill. But I cannot let pass the literacy, or lack of it, of the very first clause. In turn, the Secretary of State, local education authorities and head-

teachers are repetitively enjoined "as required by the Education Act, 1944, to secure that every child of compulsory school age shall receive a sufficient education to enable him to attain a standard of literacy and numeracy which will enable him to take full advantage of opportunities for further education and training".

Sally 15.501 currently  
National Audit, 1988



RICHARD JAMESON

# Lost for words

'With a poet as Secretary of State . . . we looked for something better in the language of his Bill'

formulation is condemned alike by Gowers in *Plain Words* and by Fowler. With a poet as Secretary of State – the first since Lord Hailsham, who once answered a Parliamentary Question in verse – we looked for something better in the language of his Bill.

In the Christmas season I have enjoyed – or endured – a number of speeches at public functions. Two were admirable. One mayor, military in bearing but an accountant by profession, was deft, humorous and graceful in his tributes; his guest, a chief constable, told a story with a perfect deadpan expression and sense of timing. Both, without straining for effect, had achieved success in a specially difficult art form, the use of the spoken word. Unconsciously, they echoed in their speeches the words that Mark Twain used to describe a good writer's treatment of sentences: "At times he may indulge himself with a long one, but he will make sure that there are no folds in it, no vaguenesses, no parenthetical interruptions of its view as a whole; when he has done it, it won't be a sea

serpent with half of its arches under the water; it will be a torchlight procession."

Do many teachers of English have a vision of torchlight processions? I doubt it. Some go at it in the old-fashioned way, like the man who taught me to write a précis in precisely one-third of the length of the original or his colleague whose *bêtes noires* were the words "get" and "nice".

Others, in the modern primary school, are better at encouraging early self-expression in writing and speech, but sometimes leave their pupils at 11 still floundering with sentence structure. If so, they will be handicapped for life. (I go some of the way with Melanie Phillips of *The Guardian*, who argued a few weeks ago that those without Latin as a foundation for their English are deprived culturally, socially and politically – three adverbs with Latin roots, I notice.)

And arithmetic – number, in the jargon – is not in much better case. My School Certificate (that dates me) maths teacher was a Cambridge Wrangler. But every week

he put us through our paces in arithmetic. For a nation of shopkeepers are lamentably bad at it. How many of them can give the right change without, or even with, recourse to the calculator?

Here the independent schools, in the of Nuffield maths and all the rest of it, take part of the blame. For a time in the 1960s, my opposite number – Treasury was Peter Jay, a Wykehamist. Giles Radice. (That was before he soared to *The Times*, Washington and Robt Maxwell.) We often met to argue about spending on education. As the rest of laboriously worked out in our heads 70 per cent of 200, Peter twirled his upturned cylindrical slide rule; 1,400 he announced triumphantly. He was beaten by the damned dots, like Lord Randolph Churchill, an Etonian and one of Nigel Lawson's numerate predecessors. The era unfortunately, was always to the Treasury's advantage.

Perhaps I am too critical. Most of us, of the time, manage to make ourselves understood and to get the numbers more or less right. If we cannot, it is nice to think the national curriculum will put it all right for our great-grandchildren.

## NEXT WEEK

This year, next year  
What happened, and what will

## Violence on television

Tough decisions for schools  
broadcasters

## Lure of the lab

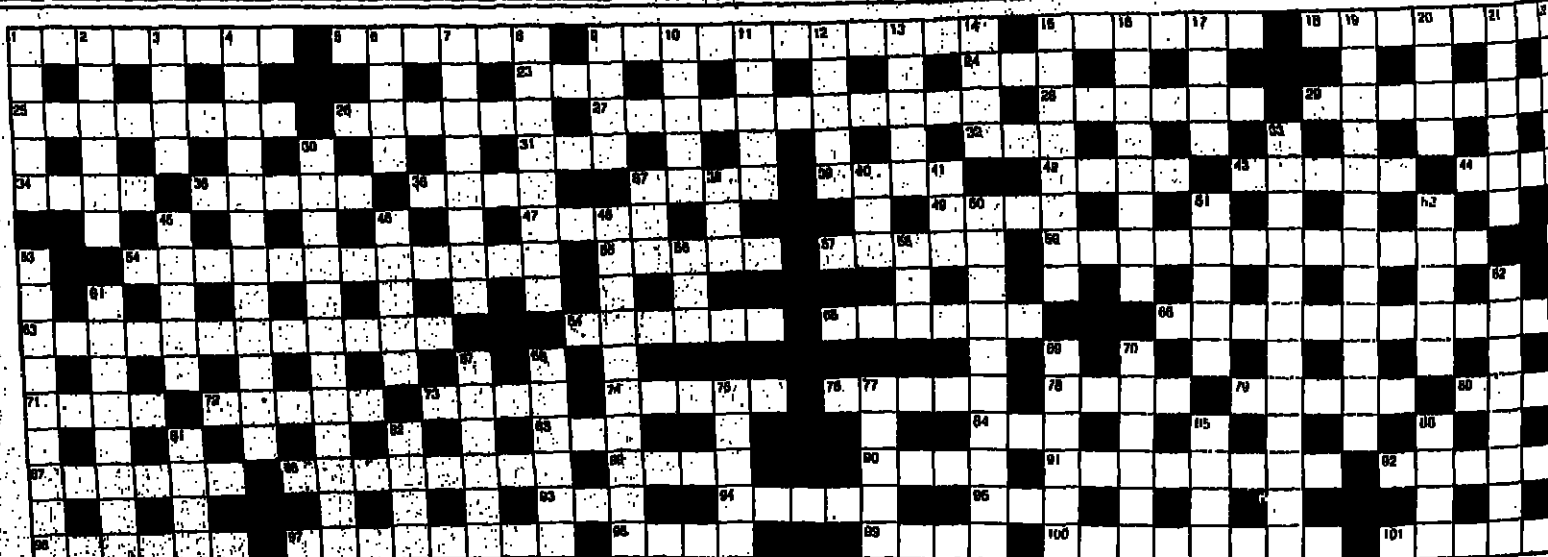
The industrial scientist who couldn't  
stay away from the classroom

Extra: Science

## Christmas Crossword by RUTH

## ACROSS

- 1 Bearing gifts, we hear vaguely (8)
- 5 It may be tied up for the present (6)
- 9 Carol's kind thing is in tatters (6,5)
- 15 Leave some pudding, we hear (6)
- 18 He reformed under the influence of spirits (8)
- 23 Measure of land in Nazareth (3)
- 24 The man from whom Samuel imbibed wisdom (3)
- 25 Winter dancing party? No, but it's thrown for enjoyment (11)
- 26 Either sing a carol together or refrain (6)
- 27 Wait here! (5,6)
- 28 During the festivities it's high, and could make you so (6)
- 29 59 across is this to Jesus (8)
- 31 Party drink for a child? (3)
- 32 Fruit in a returnable container (3)
- 34 It may hold needles on the tree – but only as a present (4)
- 35 Third man goes East for the tree (5)
- 36 Piece of jewellery for the wife's Christmas box? (4)
- 37 Fellow making a Christmas confection (4)
- 39 It's always in the verse on a greeting card (4)
- 42 Very popular winter sports range (4)
- 43 Sleet in the street from snow and rain (5)
- 44 Fruit for December 25, perhaps (4)
- 47 He makes off Santa's goods (4)
- 48 Discard the Christmas present (4)
- 49 Being of high intelligence? (6,6)
- 50 Expect a group of cavaliers (5)
- 51 They are ground for new year win (4)
- 52 They are in the wings now – in time for the (3)
- 53 They are original Christmas presents (3)
- 54 They are down all day in cold weather (4)
- 55 Father makes the remains of Christmas dinner, perhaps (6)
- 56 One, for example, to streak out on the ice (6,4)
- 57 Put up a rabbit, perhaps (4)
- 58 Look at a carol, perhaps (5)
- 59 Across having a different image on East (4)
- 60 Habit of a well-fed wife man? (5)
- 61 Graduates at home for string the pudding (5)
- 62 Drinks included in the meal, especially at Christmas (4)



## DOWN

- 7 Reverses the back-end of Christmas-tide (5)
- 8 An ecclesiastical recital (4)
- 10 Look for what blows up the balloons (3)
- 14 Some substitute for the bird (3)
- 17 Spirit distilled in Borneo (6)
- 18 Sending out East on a job, like the Three Wise Men? (8)
- 19 Eager to have knowledge about the Orient (4)
- 20 Partly wrap Edna's present before it's taken off (4)
- 21 Strangely happy in Eastern religious festival commemorating Jesus and the Magi (8)
- 22 Seems a strange herb, openly used by Ali Baba in pantomime (6)
- 23 Christmas-time entertainment about an English river (3)
- 24 Finishing off the Christmas cake (5)
- 25 New Eastern leader is against, but not this month (3)
- 26 Christmas celebration when a tree's set out (6)
- 27 Christmas gifts offered by about ten different papers? (8)
- 28 You'll say it for Christmas (4)
- 29 A piece of cake for the midshipman (4)
- 30 Unfamiliar shown by Cinderella's sisters (8)
- 31 Whence the Three Kings tore in, perhaps (6)
- 32 Crackers and what they're used for (4)
- 33 More than one heavenly sign for wise men of the past (6)
- 34 Come to a similar conclusion in a carol, perhaps (5)
- 35 Used to knock a toboggan to pieces? (12)
- 36 Spud and dumpling making up Christmas fare (4, 8)
- 37 Not a high sound from a stablemate of Jesus (3)
- 38 The chum robin's hold for us (3)
- 39 Some Levantine transport (3)
- 40 Eggs put in a venison pie, perhaps (3)
- 41 Festivity involves five in a lively dance (5)
- 42 Christmas meal without a starter? It won't please this man (5)
- 43 Have some discussion over Christmas dinner (4, 6)
- 44 Up-to-date description of Christmas? (7, 3)
- 45 Awake to what the Christmas pudding needs (5)
- 46 Prepares gifts and cards (5)
- 47 Take choir in a new version of what may follow "Jerusalem" (9)
- 48 Girl returns a greeting (3)
- 49 Toy revolver, a present for a child (3)

Solution to puzzle 336

